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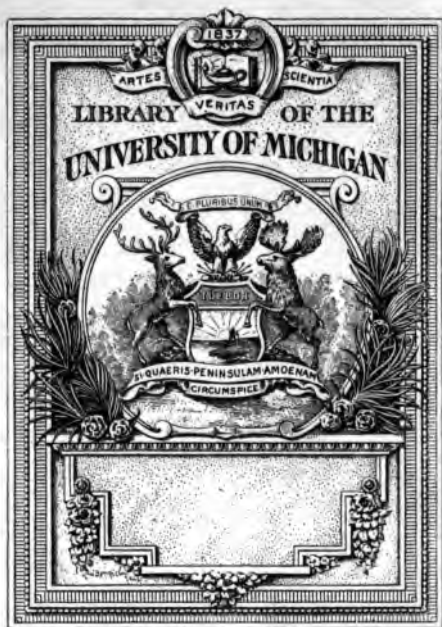
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GENERAL EDITOR: CYRIL DAVENPORT

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*King Cophetua
and the Beggar-Maid.*

OF MICH.

BURNE-JONES

BY

FORTUNÉE DE LISLE

WITH FORTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS

METHUEN & CO.
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PREFACE

IN this brief study of the life and work of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, no detailed biography has been attempted. That will shortly be forthcoming from the pen of one better qualified than anyone else to write it. This little work has merely been undertaken in the same spirit as that in which W. Morris wrote of the cathedrals of North France: "I thought that even if I could say nothing else about these grand churches, I could at least tell men how I loved them."

To the many owners of pictures by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, to whose collections the writing of this book has been the "Open Sesame,"—to the authors whose works have been consulted, and to whom reference is made in the following pages,—to Mrs. William Morris, Mrs. W. J. Hadley, Mr. R. H. Benson, Mr. Ch. Fairfax Murray, Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi, and others, for their courtesy in allowing the use of their valuable copyrights,—and for the uniform kindness and ready assistance which have been met with on every side,—the writer desires to express her most sincere gratitude.

November, 1904

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PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

THE author is glad of the opportunity afforded by the issue of a second edition to make a few corrections and additions to the list of works, and to add to the bibliography the beautiful "Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones," which appeared last November, simultaneously with this little study of his art.

November, 1905

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•

" No sweeter, no kindlier, no fairer,
 No lovelier a soul from its birth
Wore ever a brighter and rarer
 Life's raiment for life upon earth
Than his who enkindled and cherished
 Art's vestal and luminous flame,
That dies not when kingdoms have perished
 In storm or in shame."

A. C. SWINBURNE



BURNE-JONES

CHAPTER I

EARLY YEARS

1833-1853

Contrast between the art of Burne-Jones and the spirit of his time—English art in the first half of the nineteenth century—The romantic movement—The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood—Burne-Jones—His early years, education, and entrance into Oxford University.

THE eminent French critic, M. de la Sizeranne, recalling the impression produced upon him by the English pictures at the Universal Exhibition held in Paris in 1889, wrote the following words: "As we came out of the Gallery of Machinery, . . . we found ourselves in the silent and beautiful English Art Section, and we felt as though everywhere else in the Exhibition we had seen nothing but matter, and here we had come on the exhibition of the soul." Referring to one picture in particular—Burne-Jones's "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid"—he continued: "It seemed as though we had come forth from the Universal Exhibition of Wealth to see the symbolical expression of the Scorn of Wealth. All

round this room were others, where emblems and signs of strength and luxury were collected from all the nations of the world—pyramids, silvered or gilt, representing the amount of precious metal dug year by year out of the earth; palaces and booths containing the most sumptuous products of the remotest isles—and here behold a king laying his crown at the feet of a beggar-maid for her beauty's sake! There might be seen the most highly wrought instruments of war: cannons, models of armour-plated ships, and torpedoes; and here was a knight duly clad in iron, bowing in his strength before weakness for its innocence's sake. It was a dream—but a noble dream—and every young man who passed that way, even though resolved never to sacrifice strength to right, or riches to beauty, was glad, nevertheless, that an artist should have depicted the Apotheosis of Poverty. It was the revenge of art on life. And they could but wonder, 'Who is this man who dares even now to paint the ideal of poverty, when we all aim at the reality of comfort? Who is the artist whose anachronism inculcates repose in the midst of railways, and that in a style worthy of Mantegna, in the midst of styles *à la* Carolus Duran? Who is this thinker so scornful of prejudice, so indifferent to all that is not inspired from on high. . . ?' ”¹

The contrast here so strongly drawn between the spiritual atmosphere of Burne-Jones's picture and its material surroundings, is typical of the

¹ The *Magazine of Art*, 1898. "In Memoriam, Sir Edward Burne-Jones," by R. de la Sizeranne.

life and character of the artist in relation to the age in which he lived. It has been well said that he was "a thirteenth-century soul strayed by accident into the nineteenth"; he was a poet, an idealist, a dreamer, a Celt of the Celts, to whom the material surroundings of his daily life were less real than the beautiful visions which haunted his imagination; and this "Painter of Other-worldliness," as he has been called, was born in a materialistic age of mammon-worship, in which the insatiate grasp of commerce was upon everything, and the spirit of awe and of wonder had almost been driven from the face of the earth. He was to be the painter of the Golden Age of the world, and his childhood was spent in the Black Country, in a middle-class home in the Birmingham of the early thirties,—a very different place from the Birmingham of to-day, with her half-million and more of inhabitants, her fine public buildings, her splendid museum and art school, and her noble reputation for the encouragement of all the arts. That the dawn of a new epoch was even then beginning to break is shown by the fact that the rebuilding of the Grammar School had been entrusted to Sir Charles Barry, the architect of the Houses of Parliament; yet there was but little to lift the soul from its workaday surroundings in those crowded streets of mean and meagre aspect, wherein the keen struggle for existence reduced life to a hideous nightmare.

The fact that art had little place in the life of Birmingham was but an instance of the general

contempt and indifference in which it was held throughout England at that period. The great days of Reynolds and Gainsborough were over ; Turner and Constable still shed the splendour of their genius upon the school of landscape-painting, but their sun was soon to set. As to the painters of figure subjects, the aim of their pictures was rather to amuse or to instruct than to appeal to those perceptions and feelings which lie beyond thought, and which art alone can reach. Pseudo-classicism, feeble imitation and conventionality, had usurped the place of direct observation from nature and personal interpretation, and so long as the traditions and rules which had been evolved from the works of the great painters of bygone days were adhered to, nothing else was demanded. Art as an expression of the national spirit did not exist, nor was the term supposed to apply to anything but pictures, the luxury of the rich. Art, "the spiritual element in the works of men's hands," which, as "the constant condition of good quality in all things rightly made," should have had the most intimate connection with the life of the nation, was put aside as of no vital importance.

Yet it was at the very moment when the prospect of a truly national art arising in England seemed most unlikely, that the great romantic movement—that "Renascence of the Spirit of Wonder in Poetry and Art," which was the natural reaction from an age of rationalism and materialism—came sweeping over the country, and, after awakening poetry and literature into

new life, began to express itself in the works of Ford Madox Brown, G. F. Watts, and of that small group of greatly gifted men, who, calling themselves—in a paradoxical spirit—the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, clustered round D. G. Rossetti. Then the old formulas in art, as in other things, were cleared away, and men were brought again into direct communion with nature; then “the solemn human soul” awoke once more to that consciousness of a mystery beyond “the shows of things,” which is the essence of the romantic spirit; then painting became intense poetry as well as vigorous art; and a truly national school came into existence, which, with the same earnest spirit which had animated the Italian painters, but with greater knowledge and power at its disposal than had been theirs, sought to reconcile the classic ideal of old Greece with the modern spiritual ideal of humanity. Soon the principles of this new school began to spread beyond the boundaries of the pictorial, and within thirty years of the foundation of the Brotherhood, the movement had expanded into a revival of the decorative arts,—a fact mainly due to the fortunate association of two great men, Burne-Jones and William Morris, and to their conjunction with Rossetti.

Little is known of the ancestry of Burne-Jones. His great-grandfather, who was of Welsh origin, was a schoolmaster at Hanbury, in Worcestershire, and had a son, Edward Bevin Jones, who married Edith Alvin. Their son, Edward Richard Jones, married Elizabeth Coley. These were the

parents of the child, who, born on the 28th of August, 1833, at 11, Bennett's Hill, Birmingham, received in the parish church of St. Philip the names of Edward Coley Burne, the last of which was later adopted as part of that surname which has become throughout the world "a watchword, a standard hailed with the enthusiasm of younger men in the new effort for idealism, the most vigorous artistic movement of later days."

A lonely childhood fell to the lot of the delicate boy, whose mother had died at his birth. From his earliest years, the education given him was of a serious nature, for it was the one ambition of his father, a man of high principles and simple piety, that his son should enter the Church; but, from the time the boy could hold a pencil, drawing was his passion, and his favourite book was a volume of Æsop's Fables, because it was adorned with prints; it is said that his childish productions were so much above the average that an appreciative friend kept and dated many of them, and gave him much encouragement. As frame-making was part of his father's business, it might be thought that the sight of the pictures which came to be framed might have supplied some incentive towards drawing; but, when one considers the kind of art these would be likely to represent in a provincial town of that day, one cannot wonder that no source of inspiration was found in them. Of real, living art there was no trace in the child's surroundings, yet nothing could quench the imaginative power of such a nature. From the remote ancestors who, in

primeval days, among the vast silences of the untrodden hills, had felt all about them the presence of the unseen, he had inherited in full that mysterious Celtic temperament to which no doubt he owed his quick perceptive instincts, the romantic disposition of his mind, his sense of reverence, his feeling of the mystery of existence and of the magic charm of nature, his consciousness of the nearness and significance of the spiritual world, which were later to find such clear expression in his work. He had, besides, too keen a sense of humour to find any surroundings dull, and the delicate health which debarred him from ever taking much interest in the usual games of boyhood, only served to accentuate his passion for reading. "If I had not become a painter," he once told a friend, "assuredly I should have become a bookworm,"—and long before he began to go to school the booksellers' shops fascinated him. Often he would stand gazing into them, longing to handle and turn the pages of the volumes whose covers alone he could see, and envying the lucky boy who stood behind the counter with such easy access to them. Little did he then dream of a wondrous future, when he would himself illustrate books more beautiful than any produced in modern times, and, wandering as he chose in a kingdom of his own of glamour and romance, bring back from it visions of loveliness, which would be amongst the most precious additions made in these latter days to the heritage of the race. And as, Sunday after Sunday, he sat in St.

Philip's Church, his dim, childish thoughts wandering far away from his colourless surroundings, little did he think that, some day, the light which shone through the great windows would stream through his work, proclaiming in his language—his beautiful language of line and colour—the divine story of the Cross.

At eleven years of age he was sent as a day scholar to King Edward's Grammar School, installed since 1835 in the fine new Tudor buildings, and then under the direction of the great schoolmaster, Dr. Prince Lee. This event he was fond of describing in after years as "a leap into the light," and, recalling the impression made by the new world which in those first school-days was opened out to him, he said: "I swam right into that deep wonderful sea of Greek literature and pagan mythology; and just as I have never forgotten my first journey to France, which gave me a sense of the poetry of background, or my first visit to Siena, where I found my spiritual ancestry in art, so I never can forget my introduction to the beautiful pagan mythology and lovely legends and literature of Greece."¹ He threw himself passionately into his studies, and in the eight years that followed laid the foundation of that wide classical knowledge which was of such inestimable value to him, and which made Ruskin declare him to be the most cultured artist he had ever met. "He had," says one who knew him well in later life, "all the qualities

¹ *The Atlantic Monthly*. "Sir Edward Burne-Jones," by William Sharp.

which go to the making of a great scholar : the sense of thoroughness which made his knowledge of any subject which interested him, deep and accurate ; remarkable powers of memory, especially of the verbal kind ; great critical and comparative powers, and the finest literary tact and taste."¹

All through these years of study his artistic powers seem to have lain comparatively dormant, but that his imagination was already finding expression in drawings of a fantastic nature, is shown by his reputation among his schoolfellows: "There was not a boy in the school who did not possess at least one of Jones's devils," wrote one of them to Mr. J. W. Mackail, William Morris's biographer. Still the idea of becoming an artist did not occur to him, and it was with the full intention of carrying out his father's wishes by taking Holy Orders, that, early in June 1852, he matriculated at Exeter College.

The college buildings being over-full, it was not till the following Lent term that he went up to Oxford. Here many disillusionments were awaiting him ; yet in the first week of his first term, he found in Oxford the best gift she had to give—a friendship which was to be lifelong—and henceforth for him the face of things was changed.

¹ *The Nineteenth Century*, 1899. "Some Recollections of Edward Burne-Jones," by Joseph Jacobs.

CHAPTER II

COLLEGE DAYS

1853-1856

William Morris—His friendship with Burne-Jones—Their college life—The monastic ideal—The Pembroke group—Influence of Ruskin—National events—Chaucer and Browning—Change of outlook—"The Brotherhood"—"The Germ"—Influence of Rossetti's art and poetry—Journey to France—The turning-point—"The Maids of Elfen-Mere"—Burne-Jones's first meeting with Rossetti—He leaves Oxford and settles in London.

WILLIAM MORRIS, who had sat next to Burne-Jones at the examination in the Hall of Exeter College, was a few months his junior; like him, he was of Welsh descent, and, like him, intended for Holy Orders, but the surroundings of his early years had been very different from those of the Birmingham boy. In his pleasant home at Walthamstow and afterwards at Woodford, young Morris had spent a happy childhood, angling, shooting, gardening; or rambling with his brothers through Epping Forest, and about the surrounding country, still unspoilt by

"... the spreading of the hideous town."

The love of the past was born in him as it was in Burne-Jones, and, from the time he could read, he had revelled in tales of wonder and adventure.

His world had always been peopled with knights and fairies, and, as a child, one of his great delights was to personate his heroes, riding alone, in a little suit of armour, about his father's park. As he grew up, archæology became his favourite study, and his love of it was second only to his passion for all natural objects. There was no old building nor monument within his reach about which he did not find out everything there was to be known, and, while at school at Marlborough, he absorbed all the information on ecclesiastical architecture and archæology which he could extract from the school library.

From the first days of their residence at Oxford, these two "dreamers of dreams, born out of their due time," knew each other for kindred spirits. Then began that friendship which has been described as a "lifelong partnership of the imagination"—a friendship founded on the secure basis of common tastes and aspirations—a friendship of which many years later Burne-Jones said: "I think it began everything for me, everything I ever cared for."

It is easy to imagine with what feelings the two young men had come up to Oxford—Oxford, with her magic name and great traditions, her "winding streets full of the sound of many bells," her hoary Gothic buildings, her broad walks and fair surroundings of river and meadow—Oxford, "the home of lost causes, and forsaken beliefs, and unpopular names, and impossible loyalties." They found indeed all they could desire in the outward beauty of the city; and reminiscences of those

"dreaming spires," cobbled walks, quaint archways, "gable-roofed and pebble-dashed" buildings, and all that constitutes the peculiar charm of Oxford, found in later years an echo in the land Burne-Jones peopled with the serene beings of his imagination. To both, however, the actual college life was a disappointment. In place of the atmosphere of lofty thought and aspiration they had expected, they found dullness and apathy. In Exeter College itself, the Rector was ill and non-resident, and both teaching and discipline left much to be desired; the tutors took little interest in the undergraduates, most of whom were either reading-men, immersed in dry-as-dust learning, or those who cared only for outdoor sports. The grand old literature of the past, to Burne-Jones so full of life and meaning, was looked upon with but scant interest, as a thing useless except for the purpose of "cramming."

In the friendship of Morris, Burne-Jones was, however, to find every compensation for this unsatisfactory state of things. "From the first," he knew "how different he was from all the men he had ever met." The two compared their thoughts, and lived in each other's constant companionship, making few friends in their own college, but becoming intimate with a group of Birmingham men at Pembroke. Their two first terms were spent in lodgings, owing to the crowded state of the college, but after the Long Vacation they were able to move in, and there, in rooms "overlooking the small but beautiful Fellows' garden, the immense chestnut tree that

overspreads Brasenose Lane, and the grey masses of the Bodleian Library,"¹ they read together not only the works which were part of their course of study, but poetry, mediæval chronicles, old mythologies, and modern authors. The legendary lore of Scandinavia then first became known to Morris through Burne-Jones, and, in exchange, Burne-Jones caught from Morris his enthusiasm for Tennyson and for *Modern Painters*.

Both were fervent Anglo-Catholics. The influence of the Tractarian movement, the ecclesiastical atmosphere which surrounded them, their love of mediævalism and the beautiful old forms of worship connected with it, helped to intensify this. Their ideal, in their first terms at Oxford, was to found a monastery in which they might "combine an ascetic life with the organised production of religious art";—even then they felt that their religious vocation would be incomplete unless it included art. As early as May 1853, when he and Morris had only been friends a few weeks, Burne-Jones alluded in a letter to "a crusade and holy warfare against the age," which was to include celibacy and conventual life; and in October 1854 the dream still flourished. However, this phase of thought was soon to be superseded by a broader view of life.

They consorted with the Pembroke group "when they wanted more company than their own." Like them, its members, with the exception of Charles Joseph Faulkner, were intended for Holy Orders, "but," says one of them,

¹ *The Life of William Morris*, by J. W. Mackail.

afterwards Canon Dixon, "that was not the bond of alliance"—the bond was "poetry and indefinite artistic and literary aspirations, but not of a selfish character, or rather, not of a self-seeking character. We all had the notion of doing great things for man—in our own way, however, according to our own will and bent." Speaking of William Fulford, whose brilliant gifts gave him a sort of leadership among them, Canon Dixon adds,—“neither he nor anyone else in the world could lead Morris or Burne-Jones.”¹

The group—or “the set” as they first called themselves—generally met in each other’s rooms in the evenings, and read Shakespeare, Shelley, Keats, Tennyson, De Quincey, Thackeray, Dickens, Kingsley, Carlyle, and all that wonderful literature in which the Romantic Movement had found its expression in England. But “it was when the Exeter men (Morris and Burne-Jones) got at Ruskin,” says Canon Dixon, “that strong direction was given to a true vocation.” *Modern Painters* had been followed by *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, and the first volume of *Stones of Venice*; and when, in 1853, the second and third volumes of *Stones of Venice* appeared, with the famous chapter, *The Nature of Gothic*, a new revelation dawned on the two young idealists, and all their friends were made to share in it. “It seemed,” said William Morris, “to point out a new road on which the world should travel.” Henceforth Ruskin became their prophet, art the paramount influence in their

¹ *The Life of William Morris*, by J. W. Mackail.

lives, and the artist's function assumed the character of a sacred priesthood, charged with its interpretation to mankind. At the same time, the independence and liberty characteristic of Oxford life gave them the means of developing along their own lines in a way which would have been impossible in any other atmosphere.

Under the influence of Ruskin, Burne-Jones spent whole days drawing flowers and foliage in the woods; and together he and Morris read architecture, studied enthusiastically every bit of mediæval design they could come across, rejoicing in the loveliness of the old manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, and filling their rooms with rubbings from old brasses. Yet all the time their knowledge of pictorial art was limited to the few early Italian pictures in the Taylorian Museum, and the woodcuts in Ruskin's handbook to the Arena Chapel at Padua. "Of painting we knew nothing," said Burne-Jones later; "it was before the time when photography made all the galleries of Europe accessible, and what would have been better a thousand times for us, the wall-paintings of Italy. I say it would be difficult to make anyone understand the dearth of things dear to us in which we lived, and matters that are now well known to cultivated people and commonplaces in talk, were then impossible for us to know."

Morris's first journey abroad, in the Long Vacation of 1854, gave a great impulse to his and Burne-Jones's artistic development. He travelled through Belgium and Northern France,

and returned full of enthusiasm for Van Eyck and Memling and for the glorious mediæval art he had seen; and he brought back with him photographs of Dürer's works, till then only known to them by the poorly executed but much-treasured woodcut of "The Knight and Death" which formed the frontispiece to a translation of La Motte Fouqué's *Sintram*.

While the leaning towards art was thus being strengthened, other influences and events were playing a part in bringing about the transformation of ideal which marked their third year at college: the theories of Kingsley, Carlyle, and Ruskin, their hatred of pretensions and shams and of every form of cant, had done much to rouse men to the necessity for action against the evils of the day; the terrible outbreak of cholera in the autumn of 1854 was followed by the Crimean War, and these stirring times seemed "the climax of a period of moral and physical stagnation from which the world was awaking to something like a new birth." Burne-Jones's uncertainty as to his vocation for the Church is shown by the fact that, at this time, he is said to have been very anxious to join the army. The monastery was no longer spoken of, and all dreams of isolation from the present were swept away by a great wave of social enthusiasm. This was further strengthened by the influence—"like two great windows letting in the air and the day"—of Chaucer and Browning, now read for the first time. They felt their kinship to Chaucer's century, and an affinity to him, the

outcome of which has for ever linked their three names together. His healthy, pure naturalism and wide sympathies, united with the vigour and large-mindedness of Browning, were greatly responsible for the change of outlook. Mr. Mackail says: "Art and literature were no longer thought of as handmaids to religion, but as ends to be pursued for their own sake, not indeed as a means of gaining livelihood, but as a means of realising life. More and more it became evident that the taking of Orders was irreconcilable with such a life as they now proposed to themselves. And the idea of common organised effort by the whole group towards a higher life gradually shifted from the form of a monastic to that of a social brotherhood."

It was no egotistical vision of a life spent in the culture of their own souls which came to these young "dedicated spirits"; they knew the scarcely human conditions in which the masses lived, and the more deeply they felt the significance of beauty to life, the more earnestly did they resolve to devote all their powers to the deliverance of their fellow-men from the

" . . . smoky net
Of unrejoicing labour "

in which they were "meshed." How could art flourish, they asked themselves, while neither freedom nor morality could exist in the great working centres where life was barely possible?—They felt that not in dreams of the past, but in present action, lay the salvation of the world;

that they, too, must have their share in the great crusade begun by Kingsley, Carlyle, Ruskin, and Tennyson, "against falsehood, doubt and wretched fashion, against hypocrisy and mammon and lack of earnestness," and, as a first step in that direction, "the Brotherhood"—as in 1855 they began to call themselves—decided to found a magazine in which to proclaim their doctrine to the world.

In the storm and stress of the period they had just passed through, dormant creative powers had been roused in the little group. Morris's first prose romances had been followed by a poem, so fine as to call forth Burne-Jones's enthusiastic pronouncement that he was "a big poet." The discovery of his powers, added to the attainment of his majority and the feeling of independence and responsibility which came with it, made him take up enthusiastically the suggestion of founding a magazine.

It was about this time that a copy of the famous Pre-Raphaelite paper, *The Germ*, fell into the little circle; a memorable event which formed the first link between Rossetti—the soul of the Pre-Raphaelite movement—and the younger men who were to continue and extend its traditions; the first link of that alliance which "consolidated the principal factors that were working in the field of reform, and resulted in the formation of a group, which for combined poetic, literary, and artistic power, is unapproached in the history of the nation."¹ *The Germ* bore on its title-page

¹ *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, by H. C. Marillier.

W. M. Rossetti's sonnet setting forth the aims of the Brotherhood, and it contained Rossetti's *Hand and Soul* and *The Blessed Damsel*. Burne-Jones and William Morris at once felt the fascination of that transcendent genius who was to have so great an influence on their lives, and whose name they had not even heard, till the appearance, in 1854, of Ruskin's *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*. They read *Hand and Soul* together, "by Isis' side, William Morris being the reader," and the impression it made on them was never forgotten. "We were both so overcome," Burne-Jones told Mr. Sharp many years later, "that we could not speak a word about it."

In the Easter Vacation of 1855 they first saw some Pre-Raphaelite pictures at the house of Mr. Windus, and later, in Mr. Combe's collection at the Clarendon Press, Holman Hunt's "Light of the World," his "Christian Priest escaping from the Druids," and also—and this it was which made the deepest impression on them—a water-colour by Rossetti representing "Dante drawing an Angel on the Anniversary of Beatrice's Death." These pictures roused the enthusiasm of the "set," and, as they pored over the pages of *The Germ*, they felt that here was another brotherhood whose aims were in harmony with theirs,—men who, like them, had felt the breath of the great awakening stirring among the dry bones of outworn dogmas, calling upon the spirit to shake itself free from the conventionalities and artificialities under which it was being smothered, and to return to nature "in all simplicity of

heart," as the true source of life and of art. It was round Rossetti, the man "born to be a lightbearer and leader of men," that this movement had centred itself; and when he appeared on the horizon of these young "crusaders of the ideal," he at once became their hero; to Burne-Jones especially, he appeared as "the greatest man in Europe," and an intense longing to attain something of the same art of expression for the beautiful visions of his own mind took possession of him. The example of *The Germ* naturally proved a great incentive to the promotion of *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*.

The Long Vacation of 1855 marked an epoch in the lives of the two friends. Morris wanted Burne-Jones to share his knowledge and enjoyment of the beautiful cathedrals and churches of Northern France, and together they saw Abbeville, Amiens, Clermont, Beauvais, Paris, Chartres, Dreux, Evreux, Louviers, Rouen and Mont St. Michel. It was a glorious tour—and "it broke down the last hesitation." On the way home, "walking together on the quays of Havre late into the August night, Morris and Burne-Jones at last took the definite decision to be artists and to postpone everything else in this world to art. It was decided that night that neither should proceed to take Orders; that the Oxford life should be wound up as quickly as possible; and that thereafter Burne-Jones should be a painter, and Morris an architect."¹

The end of the vacation was spent in Birming-

¹ *The Life of William Morris*, by J. W. Mackail.

ham, and it was during this time that Burne-Jones discovered a fine copy of Southey's *Malory's Morte d'Arthur* at a bookshop in New Street, where he had passed "hundreds of hours" reading the books he could not afford to buy. He took Morris—"the plutocrat," as he delighted to call him when telling the story—to see his "find"; Morris at once gave the necessary two pounds for it, and they rapturously read it together. It became their *livre de chevet*—"so precious that, even among their intimates, there was some shyness over it, till a year later they heard Rossetti speak of it and the Bible as the two greatest books in the world, and their tongues were unloosed by the sanction of his authority."

They returned to Oxford without Burne-Jones having broken silence as to his resolution. It was in no light spirit that he had decided that for him the entrance to the Holy of Holies lay through the Gate Beautiful:—yet he naturally dreaded the disappointment his decision must certainly inflict on the father he loved and revered, who had taken such pride in his school and college career. The profession of an artist was at that time regarded with but scant favour, and besides, he had not absolutely given up the thought of taking his degree. How long his hesitation might have lasted, it is idle to surmise. It was the sight of a drawing by Rossetti, an illustration to Allingham's little poem, "The Maids of Elfen-Mere,"¹ which, in his own words spoken

¹ *Day and Night Songs and the Music Master*, by William Allingham. Routledge & Co. 1855.

many years later, "set fire to the stubble." The ascetic and mystic beauty of the spirit-maidens—

"Spinning to a pulsing cadence,
Singing songs of Elfen-Mere,"

the attitude of the pastor's son, who with

"Hands that shook with love and fear,
Dared put back the village clock,"

to keep the loved apparitions beyond their allotted time, a certain unearthly charm and severity about the composition, made it appeal to Burne-Jones as no other drawing had ever done. He wrote of it as "the most beautiful drawing for an illustration I have ever seen. The weird faces of the Maids of Elfen-Mere, the musical timed movement of their arms together as they sing, the face of the man above all, are such as only a great artist could conceive."

From this moment Burne-Jones had but one longing: to see Rossetti, to look upon the man whose work both in art and poetry moved him so deeply. How this came to pass is best told in his own words:—

"Just after Christmas, I went to London, . . . I was two-and-twenty, and had never met, or even seen, a painter in my life. I knew no one who had ever seen one, or had been in a studio, and of all men who lived on earth, the one that I wanted to see was Rossetti. I had no dream of ever knowing him, but I wanted to look at him, and as I had heard that he taught at the Working Men's College, . . . I went to the college one

day to find out how it would be possible that I should set eyes upon him. I was told that there was to be a monthly meeting that very evening, in a room in Great Titchfield Street, and that, by paying threepence, anyone could get admittance, including tea, and hear the addresses . . . so without fail I was there, and sat at a table and had thick bread and butter, but knowing no one. But good fellowship was the rule there, that was clear ; and a man sitting opposite to me spoke at once to me, introducing himself by the name of Furnivall, and I gave my name and college and my reason for coming. He reached across the table to a kindly-looking man, whom he introduced to me as Vernon Lushington, to whom I repeated my reason for coming, and begged him to tell me when Rossetti entered the room. It seemed that it was doubtful if he would appear at all, that he was constant in his work of teaching drawing at the College, but had no great taste for the nights of addresses and speeches, and as I must have looked downcast at this, Lushington, with a kindness never to be forgotten by me, invited me to go to his rooms in Doctors' Commons a few nights afterwards, where Rossetti had promised to come. So I waited a good hour or two, listening to speeches . . . and then Lushington whispered to me that Rossetti had come in, and so I saw him for the first time, his face satisfying all my worship, and I listened to addresses no more, but had my fill of looking ; only I would not be introduced to him. . . . And on the night appointed, about ten o'clock, I went to Lushington's rooms . . .

and by-and-bye Rossetti came and I was taken up to him and had my first fearful talk with him. Browning's 'Men and Women' had just been published a few days before, and someone speaking disrespectfully of that book was rent in pieces at once for his pains and was dumb for the rest of the evening, so that I saw my hero could be a tyrant, and I thought it sat finely upon him. Also another unwary man professed an interest in metaphysics; he also was dealt with firmly; so that our host was impelled to ask if Rossetti would have all men painters, and if there should be no other occupations for mankind. Rossetti said sternly that it was so. But before I left that night, Rossetti bade me come to his studio next day. . . . I found him painting at a water-colour of a monk copying a mouse in an illumination. The picture was called 'Fra Pace' afterwards. . . . He received me very courteously, and asked much about Morris, one or two of whose poems he knew already, and I think that was our principal subject of talk, for he seemed much interested about him. He showed me many designs for pictures; they tossed about everywhere in the room; the floor at one end was covered with them and with books. No books were on shelves, and I remember long afterwards he once said that books were no use to a painter except to prop up models upon in difficult positions, and that then they might be very useful. No one seemed to be in attendance upon him. I stayed long and watched him at work, not knowing till many a day afterwards that this was a thing he

greatly hated, and when, for shame, I could stay no longer, I went away, having carefully concealed from him the desire I had to be a painter."¹

Burne-Jones returned to college after that never-to-be-forgotten visit, and continued during the Lent term to read for the Final Schools. Morris had taken his degree and had entered the office of Mr. Street, the architect, but the Brotherhood spent its evenings together as before. Fulford alone had left to edit the magazine in London for Morris. The first number appeared in January 1856. It received encouragement from such high sources as Ruskin and Tennyson, and that Rossetti was much pleased with Burne-Jones's reference to his work is shown in a letter he wrote in March to Mr. Allingham, in which these words occur: "That notice in The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine was the most gratifying thing by far that ever happened to me—being unmistakeably (*sic*) genuine. I thought it must be by your old acquaintance. . . . But it turns out to be by a certain youthful Jones, who was in London the other day, and whom I have now met; one of the nicest young fellows in *Dreamland*."²

That meeting with Rossetti was the straw which turned the balance; Burne-Jones suddenly realised that the taking of his degree would still require several months, that he was twenty-two,

¹ *The Life of William Morris*, by J. W. Mackail.

² *Letters of Dante Gabriel Rossetti to William Allingham*. Edited by George Birkbeck Hill, D.C.L., LL.D., &c. London. 1897.

and had not begun to master the rudiments of the profession he meant to adopt, that to remain longer at the University would be sheer waste of time. He cast his hesitations to the winds, and, at the end of the Lent term, left Oxford, and taking lodgings in Chelsea, started on his new career.

CHAPTER III

ROSSETTI : THE NEW LIFE

1856-1857

Work in London—Rossetti's guidance—Morris joins Burne-Jones—Cartoons for stained glass—Pen-and-ink drawings—The Red Lion Square furniture—The Oxford frescoes.

IT has often been stated that it was Rossetti's advice and encouragement which finally decided his young admirer's career ; as a matter of fact Burne-Jones did not see Rossetti again till he had left college ; then, at the outset of his new life, he found courage to go to his hero for advice upon the course of study he should pursue. Rossetti asked to see his drawings, and at once gave his wide sympathy to the youth whose genius was evident to him, even in those early works of his untrained hand. By his own experience he had learnt how hard a struggle it was for an unknown artist to earn a livelihood, and it says much for his powers of discernment, that he did not hesitate to commend the wisdom of Burne-Jones's choice, but encouraged him in it, promising, in his large-hearted way, all the help he could give, and himself undertaking the responsibility of his training.

Rossetti's ideas of art education were diametrically opposed to those current in the art schools of

the day. The usual course was study from the antique, until great perfection had been attained in copying the cast; only then was the student allowed to draw from life, and not till he had exhausted his best energy in the production of countless worked-up studies from models, in the choice and posing of which he had no voice, was he expected to attempt any original work. Rossetti held that this system was bound to destroy all creative power; he himself had found it insupportable drudgery, and had soon cut himself free from it. He considered that the student's individuality would be dwarfed, and his imagination cramped, by a long period of mechanical work, which, requiring only correctness of eye and precision of hand, left the creative faculties dormant. His theory was, that, as in the early days of art, the pupil should first watch his master at work, observing his methods, and learning to handle the materials he was to use,—then he should go to nature, and attempt to transcribe faithfully what he saw. The expression of his own individuality would follow as a matter of course.

On these principles Burne-Jones was admitted, at first one day a week, and afterwards, as the acquaintance ripened into warm friendship, as often as he chose, to Rossetti's studio; in his own words: "I was allowed to see that master at work some thirty times. Oh, the delight of it! And that was all the tuition I ever had. Rossetti was my god, and there was nobody like him in my eyes." With indomitable courage, he now set himself to master the technical difficulties,

which, in the ordinary course of things, would have been overcome at a much earlier age; later, looking back at this time, he used to say that for all practical purposes at twenty-five he was fifteen. Fortunately, to his sensitive Celtic nature, was united much of the dogged tenacity of purpose and power of sustained effort which belong to the steady-going Saxon temperament; and, without a doubt, his enthusiasm for his self-chosen master did much to sustain him through that first anxious period. Often indeed must his heart have sunk within him as he felt the difficulties which lay in his way,—but he had Rossetti's approval; he was encouraged too by Morris's strong friendship, and the continued brotherliness of the Oxford band; besides—"happy is he who has found his work," and he had certainly found that into which he could put his whole soul.

Of the marvellously stimulating power of Rossetti's influence, Burne-Jones, in his quaint humorous way, once said, "it would have transformed a turnip into a rose"; and this was a case in which no transformation was needed—the perfect flower was there in the bud: until now, its surroundings had not allowed it to blossom; what Rossetti did was to recognise its existence and to give it the opportunity of unfolding itself. Nor did he try to force its growth to imitate his own; on the contrary, as much as possible, he effaced his own personality, ever trying to lead Burne-Jones to find his own expression in his own way. From the first, he saw that the development of Burne-Jones's genius might be retarded by his

intense admiration for himself, and for that reason he withdrew his influence as much as possible the moment he thought his pupil capable of finding his own path. To these early days belongs the oft-told story illustrative of this: Rossetti found Burne-Jones at work one day on a woodland study, the one used later as a background to the picture of "The Merciful Knight"; he watched him for some time, and then, asking him for some of his own drawings which he had given him to copy, tore them in pieces and went away without a word of explanation. Naturally Burne-Jones was much distressed at the destruction of his treasures, and it was a long time before he realised that the drastic action had been prompted by admiration for his work, and that Rossetti's meaning was that he had nothing more to learn from him.

For the encouragement and direction Rossetti had given him at a most critical moment of his career, Burne-Jones's gratitude was lifelong. "I couldn't bear with a young man's dreadful sensitiveness and conceit as he did with mine," he once wrote to Mr. Comyns Carr; "he taught me practically all I ever learnt; afterwards I made a method for myself to suit my nature"; and to Mr. Quilter he described his art as an enchanted world to which Rossetti had given him the key, and in which he had lived ever since. It was Rossetti, he would sometimes say, who had made him "possible."

The friendship with Rossetti and its influence was duly shared by Morris, who regularly spent his week-ends with his friend; and the result was

that when Street removed his office from Oxford to London, Morris, who then came up with him, and shared rooms with Burne-Jones in Upper Gordon Street, determined to study painting as well as architecture, and "to get six hours a day for drawing, besides office work."

Mr. Mackail quotes a delightful letter from Burne-Jones, full of the joy of the new life: "Topsy and I live together," he says—"Topsy," frequently abbreviated to "Top," was the pet-name given to Morris, from his hair, so charmingly described by Burne-Jones, as "unnaturally and unnecessarily curly")—"in the quaintest rooms in all London, hung with brasses of old knights and drawings of Albert Dürer. We know Rossetti now as a daily friend, and we know Browning, too, who is the greatest poet alive, and we know Arthur Hughes and Woolner, and Madox Brown—Madox Brown is a lark! I asked him the other day if I wasn't very old to begin painting, and he said, 'Oh, no! there was a man I knew who began older; by the bye, he cut his throat the other day,' so I ask no more about men who begin late.—The Magazine is going to smash—let it go! . . . We cannot do more than one thing at a time, and our hours are too valuable to spend so."

The hours were indeed priceless. Not only had Burne-Jones to make up for the time he had lost from the technical point of view, but he had at once to think of earning a livelihood by the art he was only just beginning to practise. All day he worked in his lodgings, and at night he and Morris drew in a life-class in one of the many art

schools in their neighbourhood. Fortunately the commissions which were not long in coming after he had placed himself under Rossetti's guidance, soon saved him from anxiety as to the future; Rossetti, with characteristic generosity, exerted himself to obtain work for his friend and pupil, and Messrs. Powell, of the Whitefriars Glass Factory, having applied to him for a design for stained glass, he excused himself on the ground that he was too much occupied, and obtained the commission for Burne-Jones. This led to others from the same source, and the connection thus begun did not cease till the establishment of "Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co." in 1861, from which date all Burne-Jones's decorative work was executed for his friend's firm.

The first of his innumerable cartoons for windows was one representing "The Good Shepherd." His artist friends were delighted with it; Rossetti wrote: "Jones has just been designing some stained glass which has driven Ruskin wild with joy. The subject is 'The Good Shepherd.' Christ is here represented as a real shepherd, in such dress as is fitting for walking the fields and hills. He carries the lost sheep on His shoulders, and it is chewing some vine leaves which are wound around His hat. A lovely idea, is it not? A loaf, a bottle of wine, the Sacred Elements, hang at His girdle; and behind Him is a wonderful piece of Gothic landscape. The colour of the whole is beyond description."¹

¹ *The Art Annual*, 1894. "The Decorative Work of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart.," by Aymer Vallance.

This design was at once followed by two others representing "St. Peter" and "St. Paul." In the first, the sea is represented by conventional waves and fishes; St. Peter kneels in his boat, symbolic of the Church, and receives the key from Christ, whose hand alone appears; two crimson-winged angels bend above him, the one supporting five kneeling figures of mail-clad men with hands folded in prayer,—the other, the same number of women in the same attitude, robed in black, with high white coifs. These figures, representative of the humanity which the Church is to save, are on quite a small scale, and produce a quaint archaic effect. In the second, St. Paul is represented in armour and kneeling, while two angels bend over him, the one holding to his lips the Cup of the Sacrament, while the other girds him with the Sword of the Spirit. Three more cartoons, executed for Bradfield College, represent "Adam and Eve," "The Tower of Babel," and "Solomon and the Queen of Sheba." All are treated with great breadth, and show fine feeling for design and colouring, while the way in which the possibilities and limitations of the material have been understood is remarkable; and, when one considers to what a low level the art had fallen, and the youth and inexperience of the artist, they are truly, as Mr. Aymer Vallance has said, "amazing accomplishments."

It was not long before the proficiency Burne-Jones had attained in this branch of design was such as to allow of his giving a course of lessons on the subject at the Working Men's College, and

thus sharing in the work about which he and Morris were so enthusiastic. This was about 1859, the year in which he designed "The Legend of St. Frideswide"¹ for the North Choir Chapel of Christ Church, Oxford, a gorgeous and elaborate piece of work, the beautiful cartoons for which were afterwards painted in oils and mounted into a screen. In this representation of sixteen incidents of the life of the Saxon saint, Burne-Jones follows her through all the details of her history, filling in with his own rich imagination the bare outlines given by the ancient chroniclers. Unfortunately, owing to a wrong set of measurements having been given, the designs were made on too large a scale; in the reduction to which they had to be submitted, somewhat of the intended richness of effect was lost and a slightly confused aspect produced instead.

The last window designed for Messrs. Powell was for Waltham Abbey. It is in three lights, representing, on one side, the Fall of Man, and the gradual ascent through the Patriarchs to the giving of the Law, shown by the figure of Moses holding the Tables; on the other, the revelation of the Messiah is typified by the figures of the Prophets of the Old Testament and of St. John the Baptist surrounded by the herald angels. In the central light, as the eye travels upward from

¹ St. Frideswide was a royal maiden of the eighth century, who, persecuted by Algar, King of Mercia, finally retired to Oxford, where she became the original patroness of the church which is now the cathedral of Christ Church. She died A.D. 740.

a symbolical representation of the Lion of Judah, through the curving branches which divide from one another the kingly descendants of David, it reaches two circular groups representing the Nativity and the Adoration, above which is the culminating point of the whole window—the Crucifixion.¹

The designing of cartoons for stained glass by no means represented the whole of Burne-Jones's activity during those first years ; with that work to rely upon, he was able to devote the rest of his time to the carrying out of his pictorial ideas. Among his earliest works were some pen-and-ink drawings on vellum, wonderful for their imaginative power and delicacy of finish. It was in reference to these that Rossetti wrote in February 1857 to William Bell Scott—"Two young men, projectors of *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, have recently come to town, and are now very intimate friends of mine. Their names are Morris and Jones. They have turned artists instead of taking up any of the careers to which the University generally leads, and both are men of real genius. Jones's designs are models of finish and imaginative detail, unequalled by anything except, perhaps, Albert Dürer's finest works ; and Morris, though without practice as yet, has no less power, I fancy." A few months before, in December 1856, he had written to William Allingham—"Morris and Jones have now been

¹ All these cartoons, with the exception of those for the St. Frideswide window, are in the possession of Messrs. Powell, and can be seen at the Whitefriars Glass Factory.

some time settled in London, and are both, I find, wonders after their kind. Jones is doing designs which quite put one to shame, so full are they of everything—Aurora Leighs of art. He will take the lead now in no time."

One of the most remarkable of these "Düreresque" designs is that entitled "The Waxed Image." Executed in 1856, the first year of Burne-Jones's artistic career, it deals with the tradition of black art by which a subtle connection is supposed to exist between living persons and their waxen effigies. Rossetti had treated the subject in his weird ballad, *Sister Helen*, but though Burne-Jones was enthusiastic about that "glorious stuff," as he called the poem in a letter to Madox Brown, his work was not an illustration of it, but told a story of its own. It is a design in two divisions, the first of which represents, with all the mediæval accessories of trap-door, black cat, and tolling bell, a turret, in which a princess has sought out the witch whose incantations are to rid her of a hated rival: she kneels, with face averted from the fearful deed, while the image of her enemy is being melted in the furnace in the centre of the room. In the second compartment is shown the working of the evil spell—the hapless victim expiring in the arms of her lover. Through the window the turret can be seen, and in the distance, a procession—probably meant to represent, as in the works of the early painters, another scene of the story, the girl's funeral—is wending its way through a great gate.

At the end of 1856, a change the friends made

in their lodgings, which first called into activity Morris's genius as a decorator and manufacturer, gave fresh scope to the energy of both. Morris had found out the impossibility of the double life he was leading, and Rossetti's influence continuing in the ascendant, he decided to give up architecture for painting, and so left Street's office. The rooms they were in then became inadequate, and those in Red Lion Square, occupied in the early days of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood by Rossetti and Deverell, happening to be vacant, the friends moved into them, and the question of furnishing arose. Hitherto they had perforce contented themselves with the commonplace furniture of their lodgings, and doubtless they had been obliged to endure all the horrors proper to the early Victorian period; it became a different matter, now that they were to have their own "properties,"—only the furniture they wanted existed nowhere but in their own minds. Morris, with his practical genius, soon saw the way out of the difficulty; since they could not buy what they required, they would design it themselves, and the local carpenter should make it. No sooner was the plan thought of than it was carried into effect: and the first results were—according to a letter from Rossetti to Allingham—a table "as firm and as heavy as a rock," and a chair "such as Barbarossa might have sat in." "Morris," he wrote on another occasion, "is rather doing the magnificent . . . and is having some intensely mediæval furniture made—tables and chairs like incubi and succubi.

He and I have painted the back of a chair with figures and inscriptions in gules and vert and azure, and we are all three going to cover a cabinet with pictures." Mr. Mackail gives Burne-Jones's own reminiscences of those times—the frequent amusing scenes with the carpenter—the arrival of the above-mentioned cabinet whose entrance choked the passages and stairs with "large blocks of timber," and which when set up occupied one third of the studio—Rossetti's appearance on the scene—"always a terrifying moment to the very last"—and his laughing approval.

It was on this historic piece of furniture that Rossetti painted his two well-known pictures of the "Salutatio Beatrixis." Later it was removed to Morris's house at Bexley Heath, where it was put up as a fixture with a music gallery above it, and, when he left, it remained as part of the house. The priceless panels painted by the master's hand were however removed; they are now in the possession of Mr. F. J. Tennant, of North Berwick.

The next thing Morris required was a kind of wardrobe or cabinet, and this, in the spring of 1857, was decorated by Burne-Jones with his first oil-painting, an illustration of Chaucer's *Prioress's Tale*.

The scene of Chaucer's story is "in Aey in a greet citee." It tells of a "litel clergeoun" (or chorister) "that seven years was of age," whose chief delight was in the praise of the Virgin; twice a day he passed through the Jewry

on his way to and from school, singing *Alma Redemptoris* in her honour, and the Jews, angered by this,

“han conspired
This innocent out of this world to enchain.
An homicide thereto han they hired,
That in a ally had a prive place.”

And they

“Kut his throte and in a put him caste”—

but a miracle was wrought: the “pore widowe,” his mother, discovered the place where his body has been hidden, by hearing him singing his favourite song; the murderers were brought to justice, and the child, “syngyng his song alway,” was laid on a bier, and taken to the “next Abbay” for burial. On the abbot questioning him as to the cause of this wonder, he replied that it has been wrought that “the glory of Christ may laste, and be in mynde, and for the worship of his moder deere,”

“ To me sche cam, and bad me for to syng
This antym verrailly in my deyenge,
As ye have herd; and whan that I had songe,
Me thought sche layde a grayn under my tonge.
Wherefor I syng, and syng moot certeyne
In honour of that blisful mayden fre,
Till fro my tonge taken is the greyne.
And after that thus saide sche to me:
‘ My litil child, now will I fecche thee,
Whan that the grayn is fro thi tongue i-take,
Be not agast, I wol the not forsake.’”

The abbot then removed the grain, and the child “gaf up the gost ful softly.”

The front of the cabinet is divided into two

doors, one about double the width of the other. On the narrower one, Burne-Jones depicted the Virgin, against a background filled with angels, starting on her mission. In the lower part of this panel, Chaucer is seen writing the story. On the other door, the Virgin is represented putting the grain in the child's mouth. Burne-Jones, with his characteristic horror of the repulsive, has left out all the hideous details of the story and retained only its sweet old-world mystical character. The child is rising as in sleep, with folded hands and closed eyes, from the ground above the cellar where he has been hidden by his murderers. The manner of his death is left to the imagination; there is no ghastly wound in the fair young throat as the innocent face is raised to the Virgin,—such a Virgin as her little worshipper must often have seen in his dreams, draped in deep blue and bending towards him with gentle face and motion. Beyond the figures is a turreted mediæval town with a background of fields and trees silhouetted against a gold sky. In the town, different scenes of the story are represented; the school with the scholars trooping in, and the child, distinguishable by his halo, sitting there singing; on the other side of the picture he is seen detained by a woman who is whispering to an accomplice. The colouring is extremely fine and the twice-repeated dark patch of flat colour made by the Virgin's mantle, enhances the richness and brilliancy of the whole effect. This cabinet, now lent by Mrs. Morris to the Oxford Museum, was one of Morris's most

treasured possessions ; the painting on it differs little, in the conception of the subject, from the picture which forty years later was the last work to leave Burne-Jones's studio for exhibition,—an example of the tenacity of purpose with which he worked out his artistic conceptions, living with them ever in his mind, and constantly seeking to give them more beautiful, more perfect expression.

In August, 1857, Burne-Jones and Morris joined Rossetti and other of his friends in the attempt to decorate the walls of the Oxford Union Debating Hall.¹ While on a visit to his friend Mr. Woodward, the architect of the Union, Rossetti had been struck by the possibilities offered by the broad space divided into ten bays, each pierced by two windows, which ran round the upper part of the room. In his magnificent way, he at once offered to come with his friends during the Long Vacation and, expenses being defrayed by the Union, to paint this space with subjects from the *Morte d'Arthur*. The offer was warmly accepted ; Rossetti "issued his orders," and it was not long before a gloriously gifted company of young enthusiasts—unfortunately totally inexperienced in methods of fresco-painting—rashly started work on the walls prepared only by a coat of white-wash.

These were, besides Rossetti, Arthur Hughes, Spencer Stanhope, Val Prinsep, Hungerford Pollen, Morris, and Burne-Jones ; it was in vain that the last had tried to excuse himself on the ground of his inexperience. Munro, the sculptor,

¹ Now the library of the Union.

had also been pressed into the service for a carving on the porch.

The energetic Morris was the first to begin and finish his picture, "How Sir Palomydes loved La Belle Iseult"; he then set to work on the decoration of the ceiling and carried it out triumphantly.

Burne-Jones had chosen as his subject "Merlin and Nimuë"; he represented the wizard being drawn to his doom by the tall red-robed Nimuë, who stands facing him as he approaches the enchanted well which is to be his prison. In spite of the ruin which has overtaken the work, its fine lines and careful execution are still distinguishable. It was finished in the autumn and Burne-Jones then returned to town. His "Merlin and Nimuë" was described by Morris as "a beautiful work which admirably suits its space as to decoration," and Rossetti wrote of it to Professor Norton: "Jones's picture is a perfect masterpiece, as is all he does." But alas for all the loving labour which had been spent on the unprepared surface! Six months had not gone by before the paintings began to blacken and peel, and to-day little remains of that glory of colour which, for a brief period, made the walls look "like the margin of a highly illuminated manuscript."¹

Sic transit gloria mundi. Yet this attempt was not without far-reaching results, chief among which was the bringing of Rossetti into personal contact with the Oxford group. His art, his way of looking at things, were impressed on their

¹ Article by Coventry Patmore in *The Saturday Review*, December, 1857.

culture, but he was also strongly influenced by the new and stimulating environment in which he found himself, and from this time the Pre-Raphaelite movement, of which he had been the soul, entered upon a new phase of which he, Morris, and Burne-Jones were the leaders. It was a growth which had in common with the original P.R.B. the aims which had originally united their members, and which are thus enumerated by Mr. W. M. Rossetti:—"1, To have genuine ideas to express; 2, To study Nature, so as to know how to express them; 3, To sympathise with what is direct and serious and heartfelt in previous art, to the exclusion of what is conventional and self-parading and learned by rote; and 4, And most indispensable of all, to produce thoroughly good pictures and statues."¹ To these aims was now added another:—the development of the decorative side of art, and the union of the element of perfect ornamentation to the expressive power of the original Brotherhood.²

The Oxford paintings thus mark the period of transition between the Pre-Raphaelite movement and the Neo-Pre-Raphaelite, or—to use a much-abused word—Æsthetic movement, which followed it.

¹ *Dante Gabriel Rossetti. His family letters. With a Memoir by William Michael Rossetti.* London: Ellis and Elvey, 1895.

² *Address on a collection of paintings of the English Pre-Raphaelite School*, delivered by William Morris at the City of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, 2nd October, 1891.

CHAPTER IV

PERIOD OF ROSSETTI'S INFLUENCE

1857-1863

Return to London—Influence of G. F. Watts—The Hogarth Club—Marriage of W. Morris—First visit to Italy—Pen-and-ink work—"Sidonia" and "Clara von Bork"—Marriage—The Red House frescoes—The Firm—Work for the Firm—The Bodley Triptych—Early water-colours—Connection with Dalziel—Second visit to Italy—Pictures and illustrations for Dalziel—More water-colours—"The Merciful Knight."

BURNE-JONES, his painting finished, returned to Red Lion Square; but Morris, who had made the acquaintance in Oxford of the beautiful Miss Burden whom he married in 1859, remained there for some time, though hardly a week was allowed to pass without the two friends meeting. In the spring of 1858, Burne-Jones, never of a strong constitution, fell ill, and was taken away from his lonely lodgings to be nursed back to health by his friends the Prinseps at Little Holland House; there he stayed several months, occupying himself with the cartoons for Powell, and with drawings in pen-and-ink on vellum of subjects mostly taken from Arthurian romance. To this period belong the fine drawings of "The Knight's Farewell" and "Sir Galahad."

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It was about this time that Burne-Jones first felt the influence of G. F. Watts. The great master, his senior by nineteen years, was already in the plenitude of his powers, and well able to advise his young friend, who, having begun his study of art comparatively late in life, felt "thirty years his junior"; it was Watts who made him feel that while Rossetti's advice, "never to allow himself to be stopped in the expression of his idea by difficulties of execution," was good and valuable, yet its effect would be bad if it led him to neglect the technicalities without which that expression could be but faltering. "It was Watts," Burne-Jones told Mr. Comyns Carr, "who compelled me to try and draw better."

The year 1858 saw the foundation of the Hogarth Club, and it was no slight honour to the youth who had so lately joined the ranks of art, that he was elected a member of it, and thus entitled to exhibit his works with those of such distinguished artists as Rossetti, Madox Brown, Holman Hunt, Frederic Leighton, and G. F. Watts. There his pen-and-ink drawings and cartoons were first shown.¹

The following spring, Morris's marriage took place, and the rooms in Red Lion Square were given up. Burne-Jones moved into lodgings in Charlotte Street, and in the autumn went on his first journey to Italy. This was a great event in his life, for there he found the land of his dreams, and, in the beautiful old cities of Florence, Pisa, and Siena, the works of the painters with whom

¹ The Hogarth Club lasted till 1864.

he at once felt his spiritual kinship. There, in the season

“Of art's spring-birth so dim and dewy,”

in the frescoes and pictures of Orcagna, Benozzo Gozzoli, Luca Signorelli, Simone Memmi, Taddeo Gaddi, Mantegna, and above all Botticelli, he found the same temper of thought which so delighted him in Chaucer and his contemporaries. The spiritual feeling, which, in the works of the early painters, is combined with so refined a sense of decorative design, appealed to him in an extraordinary manner, and in the company of the Primitives he felt himself in his own true atmosphere. He came back to London full of renewed health and aspirations, and again applied himself to pen-and-ink work. One of the most interesting of the subjects thus treated was “The Wedding of Buondelmonte,” that first episode in the story of the dissensions which for so many years disturbed the peace of Florence. In this drawing, containing about seventy figures, two scenes of the story are shown, but the tragedy itself is only suggested by the introduction of the antique statue of Mars, which held so important a place in the superstitious regard of the early Florentines, and at the foot of which the murder of Buondelmonte by the kinsmen of his forsaken bride-elect is said to have taken place. This statue, ominously dark, occupies the centre of the picture; the god of Strife is represented in the act of casting his spear in the direction of the young man to whom the lady of the Donati is

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presenting her daughter ; the Arno flows past the foot of the statue, and, on the other side of the composition, the lady of the Amadei, unwitting of her lover's desertion, is seen approaching on her barge which is guided by a blindfolded figure of Love ; she is surrounded by ladies, and the town is full of preparations for the celebration of the marriage. It is an elaborate and intricate drawing, slightly confused in its elaboration of detail, but of wonderful delicacy and minuteness of execution. The background is full of the artist's new knowledge of Italy,—hills and streams, olive trees and cypresses, quaint mediæval buildings and old gardens.

Other pen-and-ink drawings of this and the following year, were "Alys la belle Pélerine," "Going to the Battle," "Kings' Daughters," and the intensely tragic "Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins," in which the Foolish Virgins are shown in the faint light of a stormy dawn, knocking at a low door at the end of a narrow drawbridge ; beneath them the stream rushes by with the relentlessness of lost time, and, in the dark landscape beyond, the wind-tossed trees are swaying against the troubled sky.

The "St. Frideswide" cartoons for Messrs. Powell, mentioned in the last chapter, and several fine water-colours belong to 1859. Among the latter are two famous paintings representing the heroines of a weird romance written by the Swiss clergyman Meinhold, and purporting to be, not a modern work of fiction, but a newly discovered manuscript revealing the authentic and hitherto

unknown history of the beautiful and wicked Sidonia von Bork, who by her sortileges destroyed the royal house of Pomerania, and finally, in her old age, was put to death as a witch. "Meinhold," says Mr. W. M. Rossetti, in words which explain the fascination this curious book had for Rossetti and Burne-Jones,— "was peculiarly painter-like as regards accuracy of costuming and detail, presenting the outer aspect of a past century with all the precision of a contemporary portrait. He gives it in action, and in minutiae of incident and manner, and in all those numberless small points of externals, which made the same thing done in the past look differently from what it does in the present."

Burne-Jones's two pictures of "Clara" and "Sidonia von Bork" show the influence of Rossetti, yet the method of work is already decidedly his own, and it would be impossible to mistake them for the work of the elder master. They are painted in body-colour, and attain a depth of intensity in the shadows, and a quality of technique which could not be surpassed in oil. Like "The Prioress's Tale" and the cartoons for windows, they show the extraordinary instinctive feeling with which, from the beginning, Burne-Jones "laid on pigments and the colour came." Clara von Bork, one of Sidonia's many victims, advances slowly, in an amber-coloured robe with brown sleeves; her pure and gentle character is symbolised by the nest of fledgeling doves she carries, and which the witch's cat is greedily watching. Sidonia, with magnificent gold hair

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bound in a fillet, wearing a white gown covered with a black open-work robe of an intricate pattern which suggests writhing and knotted snakes, is glowering angrily, as with clenched hand she drags at the necklace at her throat. She seems the very incarnation of the spirit of revengeful hatred. In the mysterious backgrounds of both pictures, figures are seen moving about in dimly lighted rooms and passages.

By this time Burne-Jones's career was well assured ; his cartoons for glass promised constant occupation ; and, besides this, Rossetti, in his generous friendship, had brought him to the notice, not only of Ruskin, who took the keenest interest in the young classical scholar with the great gift for art, but also of Mr. Leathart who bought both the "von Bork" water-colours, Mr. William Graham who became a close friend, and other early patrons of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, all of whom were encouraging in their support. Henceforth the young artist could feel sure of sympathetic appreciation from an ever-growing circle of intelligent art lovers.¹

In the month of June 1860, he was married in Manchester Cathedral to Miss Georgiana Macdonald, one of the five gifted daughters of the Rev. G. B. Macdonald, two of whom afterwards became Lady Poynter and Mrs. Kipling. Burne-Jones had known his bride from childhood, and

¹ There is a mention in one of Rossetti's letters of Mr. Plint, the Leeds stockbroker, who was a purchaser of Pre-Raphaelite pictures, having given Burne-Jones a commission in January 1858 for £350.

had become engaged to her on leaving college ; his marriage marked the beginning of a period of quiet happiness and joyous industry, which only ceased at his death.

Meanwhile Morris had projected "a little Palace of Art of his own" at Upton, near Bexley. It was the first house built by Philip Webb, between whom and Morris a close friendship had sprung up in Street's office ; and its building in 1859-60 marked an epoch in the history of English architecture. Its name—"Red House"—in that age of stucco and slate, "was sufficient to describe it without ambiguity to all the neighbourhood." Its picturesque plan and fine proportions, its gothic arches and oriel windows, its delightful rose garden and orchard, and quaint conical-roofed well-house, all conspired to make it, in Rossetti's words, "more a poem than a house" and "a real wonder of the age." When it was ready for occupation the question of furnishing arose. The Red Lion Square furniture was installed in places of honour, but much else was required, and nothing could be bought to suit Morris's critical taste. In these days, when the movement originated by Morris and Burne-Jones has permeated every branch of manufacture, making it possible for everyone to surround themselves with objects beautiful in form, colour and texture, it is difficult to realise the difficulties these pioneers of the decorative renaissance had to overcome. "I remember," said Morris many years later, "when I was first setting up house twenty-three years ago, and two or three other friends of mine were in the

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same plight, what a rummage there used to be for anything tolerable. On the whole I remember we had to fall back on turkey-red cotton, and dark blue serge." These of course were for the hangings, but tiles and chairs and candlesticks, and all the necessities of daily life had to be created, and all manufacturers were not like Messrs. Powell, who carried out Morris's ideas in the making of glasses of all kinds, and were always willing to adopt a new design and produce something beautiful. As to other things, Morris soon found that he must set to work to manufacture what he wanted himself, and it was this necessity which settled his true vocation—that of the Master-craftsman—and brought about the founding of the famous "Firm." It was in those early days at Red House, when Burne-Jones and his wife were staying there, and Rossetti, Webb, Faulkner, Swinburne, Madox Brown, and Arthur Hughes were constant visitors, that, in the planning of the decoration of Morris's own house, the idea of making and supplying in the most beautiful forms possible, all that was necessary to make outward life lovely, took shape, and—in the words of Mr. Mackail—"the monastery of the Oxford dreams rose into being as a workshop, and the Brotherhood became a firm registered under the Companies Acts." It was the beginning of a crusade for a new faith—"The propagation of beauty through all forms of life."

While the "Firm" was being discussed, Burne-Jones, in the autumn of that year, began to decorate the walls of Morris's drawing-room with

a frieze which was to run all round the room at a height of from four to five feet from the floor. With characteristic determination he set himself again to solve the problem of painting in tempera on a freshly prepared surface. This time he was more successful, and the three scenes from the old romance of *Sire Degrevaunt* which he painted in 1860-1, have stood the test of time. The marriage of Sire Degrevaunt with the Lady Mildore was to occupy the most favourable position as to light, so the work was begun at the end of the story, with the three scenes of "The Wedding," "The Return from the Ceremony," and "The Marriage Feast," in which last painting William Morris and his bride are represented as the hero and heroine. The quaint treatment of the subject, the fantastic costumes and rich colouring are delightfully decorative. It is to these pictures that Rossetti referred jokingly in a letter to William Allingham:—"I literally see no one now except Madox Brown pretty often, and even he is gone now to join Morris who is out of reach at Upton, and with them is married Jones painting the inner walls of the house that Top built. But as for the neighbours when they see men portrayed by Jones upon the walls, the images of the Chaldeans portrayed (by *him!*) in Extract Vermilion, exceeding all probability in dyed attire upon their heads, after the manner of no Babylonians of any Chaldea, the land of anyone's nativity—as soon as they see them with their eyes shall they not account him doting, and send messengers unto Colney Hatch?" In a more serious vein, which

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shows his real estimate of Burne-Jones's work, he later wrote to Professor Norton, of Cambridge, Massachusetts: "A name perhaps new to you . . . but destined to be unsurpassed, perhaps unequalled, in fame by any name of this generation—is Edward Burne-Jones. . . . I cannot convey to you in words any idea of the exquisite beauty of all he does. To me no art I know is so utterly delightful, except that of the best Venetians."

The beginning of the brave knight's story was, however, never to figure on the walls of that lovely place, for, in April 1861, the firm sprang into existence at 8, Red Lion Square, under the name of "Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co.,"¹ and work soon began to pour in so rapidly that all the members were kept busily employed. So the painting of Morris's drawing-room was put off, as well as a whole scheme which had been projected for decorating the hall and staircase with scenes from *The Tale of Troy*; and all these plans were finally abandoned when a few years later the increase of his business forced Morris to leave his much-loved home—"the beautifullest place on earth" as Burne-Jones called it—and to take up his residence in London.

The firm started with a very small capital, but with no less an ambition than "to reinstate decoration down to its smallest details as one of the Fine

¹ Mr. Marshall was an engineer, a friend of Madox Brown. The other members were Burne-Jones, Rossetti, Madox Brown, P. Webb, and Arthur Hughes. The partnership lasted till 1875, after which date the business was carried on under Morris's sole management.

Arts." It was at first "a sort of club where the members," says Mr. Hueffer, "met, designed, dined, and very boisterously enjoyed life—a good and enjoyable life in which Morris figured as 'Topsy,' Burne-Jones as 'Ned,' Madox Brown as 'Good Brown'—to distinguish him from a skilful but toping 'Bad Brown,' whose business it was to 'fire' the stained glass. . . . The whole atmosphere of the club was one of good comradeship, of high spirits and certainly of no kind either of formality or of intenseness."¹ "The goods," says Mr. W. M. Rossetti, "were first rate, the art and the workmanship excellent, the prices high. No concession was made to individual taste or want of taste, no question of abatement was entertained. You could have the things such as the Firm chose that they should be, or you could do without them."²

The architects Street and Bodley were at once able to procure work in church decoration for the new company. Bodley was building St. Martin's, Scarborough, and St. Michael's, Brighton, and windows were designed for these by Rossetti, Madox Brown, and Burne-Jones, while mural paintings were also executed in St. Martin's from designs by Burne-Jones and Morris; unfortunately these were injured by damp, and have now been painted over.

The business of the firm soon grew in all directions: "the work," says Mr. Mackail, "be-

¹ *Rossetti. A Critical Essay on his Art*, by Ford Madox Hueffer. London: Duckworth and Co., 1902.

² *Dante Gabriel Rossetti. His Family Letters, with a Memoir* by W. M. Rossetti.

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came a small whirlpool of industry that sucked in everyone who came near them." It was an alliance to which each member was able to contribute some different element of craftsmanship; thus Burne-Jones designed the figures needed, Webb the animals and birds, and Morris, always great at decorative ornament, supplied also the practical knowledge of the technique of every kind of manual work. Soon Mrs. Morris and her sister, Mrs. Burne-Jones, Faulkner's two sisters, and everyone available were pressed into the service. Talented pupils discovered in the classes at the Working Men's College were taken into the employ of the firm. Glass was designed, tiles painted, hangings and altar-cloths embroidered, furniture made, and in 1862, when it had only been started one year, the firm had become important enough to occupy at the International Exhibition two stalls which attracted much attention, and sold £150 worth of goods. One of the exhibits was the famous "King René's Honeymoon Cabinet," which Mr. J. P. Seddon, the architect, had designed for himself as a piece of office furniture, and which he, being intimate with all the members of the newly established firm, had commissioned them to decorate, wishing thereby to illustrate his theory that "in the unity and fellowship of the several arts lies their power."

This cabinet, about nine feet long and nearly five feet high, was constructed of oak inlaid with different kinds of woods, and fitted with hinges and handles of wrought and painted metal-work. Mr. Seddon wished the various arts to be repre-

sented on the ten panels into which its surface was divided. Madox Brown suggested that "Architecture," "Painting," "Sculpture," and "Music" should be represented in the four large panels by a series of imaginary incidents in the honeymoon of the artist and poet king, René of Anjou; Morris himself prepared the setting of the pictures and the gilt and diapered backgrounds on which the figures were to be painted in water-colour; Madox Brown designed the scene representing "Architecture," Rossetti took "Music" as his subject, and designs by Burne-Jones representing "Painting" and "Sculpture" were executed on the two panels of the projecting central portion. In the first, King René, crowned, and wearing a deep red robe, sits working at a fresco; Mr. Clifford describes this as, perhaps, with the exception of the "Laus Veneris," "the most gorgeous piece of solemn colour that the painter has effected. . . . It contains almost all the most splendid colours that exist, crimson, orange, green, gold and blue." The second water-colour, belonging to Mr. Fairfax Murray, shows the good king, chisel in hand, carving a statue; in both, his bride, the young Isabella of Lorraine, stands beside him contemplating his work with evident admiration. The designs for the six smaller panels in the upper part of the cabinet were done by other members of the firm to represent "Gardening," "Embroidery," "Pottery," "Weaving," "Metal-work," and "Glass-blowing."

Among other works executed by Burne-Jones in

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these early days were a set of designs for tiles for Mr. Birket Foster's house at Witley, various cartoons for silk embroidery, and another commission from Mr. Bodley, a "Triptych" for St. Paul's Church, Brighton. The centre panel represents "The Adoration of the Magi," and the two side ones "The Annunciation,"—the angel on the left panel, the Virgin on the right. This work shows plainly both the influence of Rossetti and that of the recent visit to Italy. In the "Adoration" the head of the Virgin is studied from Lady Burne-Jones, and among the worshippers are portraits of Swinburne, Morris, and the artist himself. When completed and hung in its place it failed to satisfy the young artist, who found that he had not sufficiently taken into consideration the distance from which it was to be seen, and that the detail of the background interfered with the general effect. With his usual determination that his work should be the very best he could produce, he made a replica which, painted on a plain gold background, and treated in a broader manner, fulfilled the requirements of the position it was to occupy. The original work, after passing through many hands, is now in the possession of Mr. Bodley.

Burne-Jones's productiveness was always amazing, and never more so than at this time. While carrying out these commissions he was also working at many other subjects both in pen-and-ink and water-colour. "Childe Rolande," a pen-and-ink, was the first of his works to become the property of Mr. Ruskin, and, among the water-

colours, "Clerk Saunders," "Merlin and Nimuë," "Viridis of Milan," "Cupid's Forge," "Girl and Goldfish," "The Backgammon Players" (formerly called "The Chess Players"), and the first version of "Laus Veneris" must be specially mentioned.

The subject of "Clerk Saunders," in which the old-gold gown of May Margaret, the red-brown cloak of her lover, and the two passionate pale faces against the gloomy background unite in a wonderful harmony of colour, is taken from a dramatic old border ballad. The passionate pleading of the lover for admittance out of the pitiless rain and the dark night, the no less passionately loving denial of the maid, as, standing in the narrow doorway, she resists his entrance, the sense of lurking danger and tragedy which invests the whole atmosphere, are rendered with most convincing strength.

"Merlin and Nimuë" is now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. Its frame bears an inscription from the *Morte d'Arthur*, telling how Nimuë was weary of her wizard lover, and "fain would have been delivered of him, for she was afraid of him because he was a devil's son, and she could not put him away by no means; and upon a time it happened that Meriin showed to her where was a great wonder wrought by enchantment, which went under a stone, so by her subtle craft and working she made Merlin to go under that stone, to let her wit of the marvels there, but she wrought so for him that he came never out for all the craft that he could do."

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It has been thus finely described by Mr. E. Clifford :—

“ In the picture Nimuë is pale and haughty. Her light eyes slant back at Merlin with sinister glances. The hair is parted on her forehead, and frames her face with its hay-coloured masses. She wears a straight gown of red, and a great cumbrous cloak of golden yellow lined with scarlet.

“ In her white hands she holds the fatal book, from which she reads the curse with awful curved lips that scarcely part.

“ Above is a weird, whitish sky, flecked with yellowish clouds. Against it is the harsh deep blue line of rugged hills, and in front of the hills the autumn trees rise round the dark lake which duly reflects the gloomy landscape, and shows in the middle distance its ripples and its reeds.

“ The spell is working, for the grave-stone has lifted itself up, and shows a deadly bluish light beneath it. Inside hang two keys and an adder crawls there. Meanwhile, Merlin is drawn forward, and has little power of resistance. One hand presses his beating heart, the other clutches his drapery with a gesture of despair. His dark face is full of mystery and fate. A little dog drags at his wine-coloured robes, and vainly tries to prevent his master's destruction.

“ But the weary Nimuë is inexorable.”¹

“ Viridis of Milan,” a glowing little work which

¹ Quoted, by permission, from an unpublished book by E. Clifford.

shows very strongly both in colour and feeling Rossetti's influence, represents against a crimson background a woman with red-gold hair, clothed in a purple dress with sleeves of the most intense blue, leaning dreamily forward with her arms resting on a table on which lies a pink rose.

The subject of "Cupid's Forge," originally called "Cupid and Delight," is taken from *The Assembly of Foules*, that poem in which Chaucer describes how, on St. Valentine's Day, he was led by Scipio Africanus into the garden of the Goddess Nature, before whom the various birds were assembled to choose their mates for the year. The garden is pictured in the poem in words which give the very atmosphere of that land which Burne-Jones made his own, "the strangely beautiful world apart," of which it has been so exquisitely said,—"it is the borderland between this world of work and the world of dreams, a land east of the sun and west of the moon, a land in which 'once upon a time' is the only date entered in the chronicles."¹ There are glimpses of the outskirts of this land in Burne-Jones's previous work, but here, in the secluded glade where Cupid has set up his forge, the spectator is admitted into its very heart, and, if he gazes long enough, he will feel the glamour of faëry descending like a spell upon him, enchanting his senses and taking his reason captive. A summer-land it is, where

"There never was grevance of hot ne cold"—

¹ *The Studio*, vol. xvi. "Some Features of the Art of Sir Edward Burne-Jones," by Malcolm Bell.

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the same land which Keats knew, and where he heard that

“ . . . little noiseless noise among the leaves
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves.”

The silence of Burne-Jones's pictures has been commented upon ; it has been said that as in Giorgione's pictures life is conceived as a sort of listening to music, so in Burne-Jones's it is a listening to silences ; and indeed it is a quiet land, in which winds are gentle, and voices are always soft and low, and footsteps fall lightly on soft grass, and if there is any music it is of the kind

“ which gentlier on the spirit lies
Than tired eyelids upon tired eyes ”—

and heroes and princesses, whatever dangers may encompass their path, keep an unruffled brow and serene demeanour, and go to meet their fates with equanimity. It is a restful land, and it wears a very smiling aspect in this picture, which illustrates the following lines :—

“ . . . under a tree, beside a welle, I sey
Cupide our lorde his arrowes forge and file ;
And at his fete his bowe already lay ;
And wel his doughter tempred, al the while,
The heddes in the welle ; and with her wile
She couched hem after, as they should serve
Some to slee, and some to wound and kerve.

Cupid is crowned with flowers, and the doves coo above his forge ; his daughter, “ Delight ”—a creation of Chaucer's imagination—is engaged in tempering the point of an arrow in the “ colde welle streame ” which has been made to flow

through a marble trough. The same subject, with the composition slightly altered, was treated later as a woodcut for the Kelmscott Chaucer.

The "Girl and Goldfish" is a little picture of rich colour representing a maiden in a red dress cooling her feet in a clear fountain full of shining goldfish. In the background, beyond a garden full of flowers, rises a square tower with a sundial.

In the "Backgammon Players," a knight in a dark robe and cap, and a lady in ivory white, sit playing their game in a rose-trellised garden. This picture was given to be sold at a bazaar for the relief of the Lancashire weavers during the cotton famine, and it was later discovered in a shop by Mr. Holman Hunt, who bought it for four pounds.

The end of the year 1861—in which Burne-Jones had moved to Great Russell Street—was marked by his first connection with the Brothers Dalziel. His introduction to them was through Mr. Holman Hunt, who recommended the work of his young friend to their attention in the following words: "He is perhaps the most remarkable of all the younger men of the profession for talent, and will, undeniably, in a few years fill the high position in general public favour which at present he holds in the professional world. He has yet, I think, made but few drawings on wood, but he has had much practice in working with the point both with pencil and pen-and-ink on paper, and so would have no difficulty with the material."¹ A visit to Burne-Jones's studio was the result

¹ *The Brothers Dalziel*. Methuen and Co. London, 1901.

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of this letter. "The room," says Mr. Dalziel, "was crowded with works of varied kinds, in every sort of method, all showing wonderful power of design, vivid imagination and richness of colour. We were so fascinated by the man and his art, that we at once asked him to paint a water-colour drawing, size and subject to be left to him. About that time he had painted a picture, 'a harmony in blue' for John Ruskin,¹ and it was suggested that ours should be 'a harmony in red.' After some months, the result was a most highly elaborated water-colour, 'The Annunciation.'"

An earlier "Annunciation," finished about this time, had been begun in 1857 at Oxford. Here both figures are represented standing; the Virgin with bent head, holding a dove to her breast, the angel holding a censer; between the two figures is seen the Tree of Knowledge with the Serpent coiled around it.

The picture for Dalziel, which Burne-Jones generally referred to as "the little red Annunciation" and which is sometimes known as "The Flower of God,"² is quite different, and was not painted till after a second visit to Italy, occasioned by a breakdown in health in 1862. Burne-Jones and his wife went with Ruskin to Milan, and then on by themselves to Venice, where Ruskin

¹ The writer has not been able to ascertain which of Burne-Jones's early works is the one here referred to.

² The name "The Flower of God" also belongs to one of the designs in a work of a later date,—*"The Flower Book."*

had advised his friend to study the work of Tintoretto, and had commissioned him to execute several copies. This he did, but he soon discovered that his own affinity was with the masters of the earlier schools, and especially with Carpaccio, whose series of "St. Ursula" and "St. George" were a delight to him. Ruskin had not yet "discovered" Carpaccio, and could not, at the time, understand Burne-Jones's enthusiasm for him. It was not till seven years later that, revisiting Venice, he fell under the spell of the old quattrocentist master;—then, in his whole-hearted way, he wrote—"There's nothing here like Carpaccio! There's a little bit of humble pie for you! The fact was I had never once looked at him, having classed him in glance and thought with Gentile Bellini and other men of the more or less incipient and hard schools, and Tintoret went better with clouds and hills. But this Carpaccio is a new world to me!"

The picture of "The Annunciation" was begun on the artist's return to London. In this—his third treatment of the subject—the young Virgin kneeling beside her bed in a ray of light, receives the message from a crimson-winged and red-robed angel who appears among the almond blossom outside the loggia where the scene takes place.

Another commission from Dalziel, for a Triptych representing "The Nativity," followed. In the upper section of the left-hand panel, surrounded by red anemones and blossoming fruit trees, the white-robed Virgin, raising her hand to her face as though alarmed by the angelic apparition,

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tion, is seen standing by a well. Some steps lead down to another scene in which, no longer a timid girl, but a dignified woman, she crosses the bridge which leads to Elizabeth's house, and is met by the elder woman who listens to her with clasped hands and bent head. The centre picture represents the Manger of Bethlehem. The Star blazes above it, and two angels are decorating the roof with holly; inside, surrounded by the dimly seen cattle, Mary kneels in adoration before her Babe; Joseph is busy kindling a fire, and two women are talking at the entrance. Above the manger, in the landscape seen on the left-hand side, the shepherds listen to the song of the herald angels; on the right, the kings are approaching bearing their gifts, and beneath the starry sky can be seen the great white sail of the ship which has brought them from distant lands.¹ The third picture shows the Flight into Egypt. Lights gleam from the city walls, and, through the gates, Herod's soldiers are pouring forth, but, in the foreground, Mary, holding the Child close to her face, and riding on an ass, is safely led through flowery ways by Joseph and an angel.

Other works commissioned by Dalziel were two illustrations for *Good Words*,—"King Sigurd" and "Summer Snow," a girl leaning on a wall under the falling petals of a fruit-tree, (a subject

¹ A drawing of the Nativity, entitled "The Deliverer," executed in 1864 as an illustration to one of Mrs. Gatty's *Parables from Nature*, is very similar to the central group of this composition. The five little angels on the roof are represented striking chimes on a row of bells.

of which a water-colour was painted in 1863), and some illustrations for the projected Dalziel Bible: one of these, a drawing on wood now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, represents "The Eve of the Deluge"; it shows a group of scoffing, rose-crowned figures, who, little dreaming that the sun which is going down in splendour behind them will rise on a devastated world, and heedless of the warning they might take from the birds who, wiser than they, are already seeking refuge, press round the door of the ark, jeering at the last solemn dark-robed figure seen going into it. Others were "The Coming of the Dove to the Ark," and later the masterly composition "Ezekiel and the Boiling Pot," in which the noble figure of the prophet, draped in an ample cloak, is silhouetted in profile against a light background in which is represented a scene of revelling and feasting. A small set of seven water-colours representing "The Creation" was also painted, but the overwhelming amount of other work Burne-Jones soon found himself to have on hand prevented his doing any more designs for Dalziel. For various reasons the projected Bible was never brought out, and, of the drawings mentioned, only the "Ezekiel" was included in the *Bible Gallery* published by Routledge in 1880.

Both "The Annunciation" and "The Nativity Triptych" show in a very marked degree a conscious imitation of the *naïf* character of primitive Italian art. That this was not a subjugation of the temperament of the artist, but merely a conscious and voluntary assuming of an attitude of

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mind which greatly appealed to him, is proved by the fact that none of the other works of the same year show the faintest trace of the same bias; even Rossetti's influence is beginning to wane. Two pictures of this time, however, "The Marriage of Sir Tristram," and "The Madness of Tristram," and another, done a little later, of "King Mark preventing Iseult from killing herself," were executed for a series to be carried out in stained glass, in collaboration with Rossetti, who painted for it "Tristram and Iseult drinking the Love Potion," and with Madox Brown, who chose as his subject the "Death of Tristram and Iseult"; and here it is probable that Burne-Jones voluntarily worked with the idea of producing pictures which should harmonise with Rossetti's. The works which followed show the gradual freeing of himself from extraneous influences to the final triumph of his own individuality in "The Merciful Knight" of 1863. Of these works the most important are "A Love Scene," "Fair Rosamond and Queen Eleanor," "Cinderella," "Fatima" and "Morgan le Fay."

"Fair Rosamond and Queen Eleanor" shows great dramatic power, and Mr. Clifford, who owns it, describes it as "overpowering in its force of colour";—"it consists almost entirely," he says, "of wonderful luminous black, with a touch of crimson in the Queen's robe, the white of poor scared Rosamond's dress, and hints of subdued green in the inner room, whither she vainly tries to escape. Vainly, for she finds herself caught round her body with the clue, which the Queen

grasps as hard as she grasps the gleaming dagger. There is a round mirror, composed of several little mirrors, in which Eleanor's face is reflected again and again and again, so that the place teems with her. . . . It is Fate, and there is not a shred of hope for Rosamond."

"Cinderella" is a subtle harmony in intense blue and subdued green ; here the heroine of the old nursery tale, grey-eyed, with soft hair parted on her forehead, is seen leaning against a dresser covered with old blue china ; it is the day after the ball, and in her worn and patched green gown, the little glass slipper on her foot, she leans there dreamily playing with the corner of her apron ; a pink rose is in a glass on the shelf, and, on the ground beside her, half lost in the shadow, are the pumpkin and the rat which have known such strange transformations.

"Fatima," in the picture which belongs to Lord Carlisle, is clothed in red and purple brown, and the only Oriental thing about her is her scarlet turban ; but, as with nervous hands and face of anxious expectation she fits the long thin key into the lock of the fatal door, she is a convincing representation of the fair lady of the old tale to whom curiosity so nearly proved fatal.

Burne-Jones was ever

" . . . of those that haunt
The vale of magical dark mysteries,"

and the wicked witch-queen, Morgan le Fay, King Arthur's sister, was bound to exercise her fascination over him. In his picture of her he

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has produced one of the weirdest and finest of his early works. It has had a curious history: it was stolen from the artist's studio, and, in a mutilated state—the upper part of the figure only remaining—came into the possession of Mr. Graham, at the sale of whose collection it was bought by Mr. Clifford. Fortunately a tapestry had been worked from the original by Lady Burne-Jones, and this enabled Mr. Clifford to copy the missing parts, which he then skilfully joined to the picture; the whole was afterwards worked over by Burne-Jones himself, and the damage thus completely repaired. The artist's conception of King Arthur's evil genius is very grand; she moves like an incarnation of evil, a tall dark woman in a dark mysterious landscape: "Her gaunt face is dim, like a ghost's face; under her left arm she carries a vessel full of vipers; with her right hand she raises to her mouth a poisonous herb. Her dusky hair is wreathed with serpents." And the colour!—"The colour," to continue Mr. Clifford's description, "is like Tintoretto's finest work."

The subject of "The Merciful Knight," which of all Burne-Jones's early pictures was his own favourite, and which, in spite of some immaturities still apparent, marks in the minds of many of his admirers the highest point of imaginative expression he ever attained, is taken from the beautiful Florentine legend of San Giovanni Gualberto—that noble knight of the eleventh century, who, riding forth on a certain Good Friday to accomplish his vow of vengeance on

the murderer of his dearly loved brother, came upon him alone and unarmed in the desolate road which leads to San Miniato, and stayed his uplifted sword and forgave the assassin, when, extending his arms in the form of a cross, he begged for mercy in the name of Him who dying on that day had forgiven His murderers. The legend says that, letting his enemy depart, Gualberto entered a wayside shrine, and knelt before the crucifix, and that the figure of Christ bent down and embraced him "in token that his act had pleased God." From that moment all earthly passions and desires fell from him; he forsook the world and entered the Monastery of San Miniato, and later became the founder of the famous order of Vallombrosa. Burne-Jones's picture represents the moment of the miracle. None of his later works have ever surpassed it in its expression of exalted and mystical passion, and in the "magical qualities" which are so especially his own, and without which no painting of those old-world stories can carry conviction. Mr. S. Colvin speaks of it as a work "complete in imaginative expression," and he points out how in this picture with its "lurid and sombre green tones," its "wizard loneliness and sombre awe," the peculiar poetic power of the painter, his power of complete and harmonious imagination, his "*art de passionner les détails*" finds its expression.

In the damp and moss-grown wayside shrine with its rank undergrowth of tall grass and marigolds, the knight, pale and worn from the

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spiritual struggle in which he has vanquished himself, lays at the feet of Christ his helmet, and the sword so lately drawn for vengeance, henceforth no more to be used. He kneels with clasped hands, and a strange radiance illuminates the scene, as the great carved figure bends from the cross, and with a gesture of infinite love and sympathy the soothing hands are laid on the trembling shoulders, and the kiss of the Thorn-crowned One is impressed on the brow of His new disciple. Beyond the enclosure of trellised wild briar, through the meadow which separates the lily-covered pond from the mysterious woodland, slowly, with bowed head, through the silence, the forgiven enemy rides away.

No picture of a miracle that has ever been painted, carries with it a more intense and awe-inspiring sense of the reality of a supernatural event than this one;—and the *tour de force* the painter has accomplished is this—that the impression left on the mind of the beholder who has gazed entranced on its mystic beauty, is not of the strangeness and impossibility of the event, nor of mere admiration for the skill with which it is depicted:—it is an all-pervading sense of the mystical element, which so impregnates the atmosphere of the picture as to compel acceptance of the facts presented, in the simple, unquestioning spirit of the middle ages. The mind is exalted into a region of spiritual mysteries where all things are felt to be possible, and an overpowering conviction is borne in upon one, that in such a place, at such a time, under such circum-

stances, at that great crisis of his soul's history—whether the statue in very fact bowed itself towards him, becomes immaterial—Gualberto *felt* that embrace which changed the current of his life.

CHAPTER V

THE SIXTIES

1863-1870

Election to Royal Water-colour Society—"Cupid's Forge"—
"Green Summer"—"Astrologia"—"Chaucer's Dream"—
—The "St. George and the Dragon" Series—"Theophilus
and the Angel"—"The Wine of Circe"—"Love disguised
as Reason"—"Phyllis and Demophoön"—Resignation from
R.W.S.—Removal of the Firm to Queen Square—Cartoons
for the Firm—Illustrations for *The Earthly Paradise*—
"The Cupid and Psyche Frieze"—Mr. S. Colvin's article
on Burne-Jones in *The Portfolio* 1870.

UP to this time Burne-Jones had only exhibited
at the Hogarth Club. In a letter to Mr.
Dalziel dated 1st August 1863, he wrote:—"If
agreeable to you I should like to keep the
'Annunciation' in my studio until you return;
for as I do not exhibit, that is my only way of
letting people see what I have been doing." His
work, however, was soon to come before the
public at the "Old" Water-colour Society, of
which, in February 1864, he was elected an
Associate on three pictures, one of them the
above-mentioned "Annunciation" ("The Flower
of God"); this was afterwards sent to the Spring
Exhibition, together with "The Merciful Knight,"
"Cinderella," and "Rosamond," which had been
bought by Mr. Ruskin, senior, in 1863, and was

lent by him for this occasion. Rosamond is here represented standing tying up a rose branch.

These four pictures, in which so strong and individual a personality was revealed, attracted a great deal of attention. Ford Madox Brown wrote to a friend :—" Jones's picture"—(" The Merciful Knight")—" has been badly hung by men who could not understand the poetry of it. But I never heard two opinions about its being one of his very finest, from such as are worth listening to." *The Athenæum* hailed the advent of the new member as " the most remarkable addition lately made to the Society." Other critics were less discerning and poured ridicule upon work which perplexed them by its originality and in which they could see nothing but affectation and wilful eccentricity. Fortunately Burne-Jones's was a nature little likely to yield to attacks of this sort, and strong in the encouragement of such friends as Rossetti, Morris, and Ruskin, he soon learnt to ignore the hostility he was for so many years to encounter.¹

In 1865, " Cupid's Forge " was shown to the public, and with it " Green Summer," an exquisite composition very characteristic of the special charm which belongs to the work of Burne-Jones, and of no one else. Seven girls, dressed in green,

¹ The attacks on Burne-Jones's works and his unyieldingness before them inspired Rossetti with the well-known " Limerick " :—

" There is a young painter called Jones,
A cheer here, and hisses and groans.
The frame of his mind
Is a shame to mankind,
But a matter of triumph to Jones."

sit or recline in the long grass full of flowers, by the side of a still pond which reflects the wood in the background ; some are crowned with forget-me-nots, and one caresses a lamb ; another girl dressed in black is reading to them ; the green of the dresses and surroundings is relieved by the warm tones of the hands and faces, and by the touches of red introduced here and there in the sleeves of the costumes.

"Astrologia," in red, gazing intently into the crystal globe wherein the future is revealed, was painted the same year, as also the beautiful first version of "Le Chant d'Amour" exhibited in 1866, and "Chaucer's Dream of Good Women" exhibited in 1867. Formerly in Lord Leighton's collection, this picture is now in the possession of Mr. Fairfax Murray. The poet is asleep on the edge of a fountain surmounted by a little statue of Cupid drawing his bow ; a tall poppy, emblematic of dreamland, grows beside him ; on the other side of it, the god of Love leading Alcestris by the hand approaches him, followed by three ladies ; the garden is bounded by a stone wall, beyond which is seen a grove of trees. In a later version of this picture the garden wall was left out, and more figures introduced.

The year 1865 also saw the beginning of the first of several series of pictures in which Burne-Jones represented the entire stories of his favourite heroes. This was a set of seven oil-paintings having for their subject "The Legend of St. George," commissioned by Mr. Birket Foster for his house at Witley. The first is "The King's Daughter";

in it the young Princess Sabra, till now withheld by her father from the fatal lot-drawing, is walking—a charming girlish figure—in the solitude of her garden ; she holds up her trailing rose-coloured gown with one hand, and in the other carries a little illuminated missal which she is studying. The second is the “Petition to the King” :—

“ . . . The frightened people thronging came
About the palace, and drove back the guards,
Making their way past all the gates and wards ;
And putting chamberlains and marshals by,
Surged round the very throne tumultuously.”

The third, “Moritura,” shows the result of the petition ; the Princess has gone with her companions to the strange half Christian half Pagan temple where the lots are drawn, and

“ . . . pale as privet blossom is in June,”

her agony shown only by the tightening of her clasp on her companion’s hand, she gazes on the word “Moritura” inscribed on the paper she has drawn. The next represents “The Princess led to the Dragon.” Then, in “Tied to the Tree,” she is alone in the centre of the picture, and in the distance her companions are mournfully departing. The next is “The Fight” and shows the hero, his lance broken in the encounter,—

“His bright face shadowed by the jaws of death,
His hair blown backwards by the poisonous breath,”

slaying the monster with a final sword-thrust, while the Princess, freed from her bonds, kneels with clasped hands thanking Heaven for her deliverance. The last picture, “The Return,” shows

St. George leading the Princess back to the palace :—

“So through the streets they went, and quickly spread
News that the terror of the land was dead.
And folk thronged round to see the twain go by,
Or went before with flowers and minstrelsy,
Rejoicing for the slaying of their shame.”¹

“Theophilus and the Angel,” formerly called “St. Dorothea,” begun about 1863, was exhibited in 1867. In the foreground, the centre of the composition is occupied by a bronze statue of Pan, which stands above a fountain, just outside the Law Courts, the entrance to which is on the left of the picture. Beyond, in the centre of the open square, beside the block, is seen the executioner at whose hands Dorothea has just suffered for her faith. The emperor and his court are leaving the stand erected for the spectacle, and Dorothea’s friends are carrying away her shrouded body on a stretcher, passing on their way that statue of Venus to which she had refused to sacrifice. Theophilus the Protonotary, a heavy book under his arm, is returning to the Law Courts; he had met Dorothea on her way to her death, and had asked her “why she would throw away the joys of this life for one of which no man was certain; and she answering that she should that day be with her bridegroom in the Garden of

¹ These pictures, largely repainted in 1895, were exhibited in 1896 at Stephen T. Gooden’s gallery in Pall Mall. Their titles were supplemented in the catalogue by quotations from Morris’s *Earthly Paradise*. In 1897 they were awarded the Gold Medal of the Munich Exhibition.

Paradise, he bade her jestingly, as it was February then and the snow lay on the ground, to send him some of the fruits and roses of that garden." He is thinking of this, and the half scornful half pitying smile is still on his lips as he looks back at the sad little procession. But another step will bring him face to face with a fair young angel who, just inside the doorway, awaits him with a basket of fruit and flowers, and the words—"I am your sister Dorothea sends these to thee from the place where she now is." The legend says that pondering on this, Theophilus became converted, and through the gate of martyrdom followed the saint to her fair summer land.

Every detail of this delightful water-colour is finished with the greatest care. A little bas-relief runs round the inner rim of the fountain; another adorns the doorway of the house; the little barred window, the pavement, all the architectural details as well as the delicate tracery of the bare branches of the distant rook-haunted trees, are exquisitely carried out. The grouping of the figures, the arrangement of the whole composition, is extremely skilful; there are two centres of interest and both are indispensable to the representation of the miracle, but, by the skill with which the painter has selected the moment to depict, the two parts are made into one harmonious whole. An instant later Theophilus would be confronted by the angel, and all the attention of the spectator would be riveted on that meeting; but the figures are so disposed that the eye, first attracted by the vision, next falls on Theophilus, and his back

ward glance, as he hesitates one moment in his approach, provides the necessary link with the other scene. The direction in which the spectators in the middle distance are moving, and the line formed by their procession, lead the eye to the little group who are carrying away the martyr's body; and the two girls drawing water in the foreground to the right admirably balance the composition without detracting from the more important personages. The disposition of the figures forms a half-circle; and the statue of Pan in the centre, while satisfying the eye by its decorative value, emphasises the heathen character of the surroundings, and thus helps in the telling of the story.

In 1868, Burne-Jones was made a full member of the Royal Water-colour Society, and, the following year, "The Wine of Circe" was exhibited,—a picture which marks a great advance in the overcoming of technical difficulties. All Burne-Jones's feeling for line and colour, all his emotional power, are revealed in this wonderful symphony which, in a key ranging from black and gold to white, shows the lithe figure of the enchantress, robed in an amber mantle, stooping with rapid panther-like motion from her golden snake-encircled throne to pour the magic potion into the wine jar which awaits Ulysses and his companions. Like a golden spider in her web she has been sitting motionless, watching those three sails coming towards her out of the infinite blue; now—

"Dusk-haired and gold-robed o'er the golden wine
She stoops . . ."

Rossetti wrote a fine sonnet for this picture, all the accessories of which, from the magnificent row of sunflowers to the evil-looking black panthers that come fawning to the enchantress's feet, delight the senses by their beauty, at the same time as they suggest to the mind an uncanny and evil charm which forebodes danger to the approaching mariners. The fine drawing of the hand, which steadily, drop by drop, pours the poison from the little flask, is a thing to be noted; henceforth the perfection of all the exquisitely studied hands and feet of Burne-Jones's figures is unsurpassable.

To 1870 belongs the humorous "Love disguised as Reason," with its fair scenery of gently undulating country and castellated town reflected in the calm lake at its foot. It represents two lovely girls delayed in their walk by a chance meeting with Master Cupid; they listen to him with respect and attention, for he carries a ponderous book, and his wings are discreetly folded and concealed from view under the robes of a learned doctor, and no one, unless he looked very carefully, would notice his bow; while his quiver might well be an ink-horn, with pens and not arrows projecting from it! His young face, half hidden by the falling folds of his hood, wears an appearance of wisdom, as, duly emphasising his points by the action of his hands, he lays before his fair listeners some eloquent and quite irrefutable argument. This is the only one of his pictures in which Burne-Jones has allowed free play to that sense of humour which was always revealing itself

both in his conversation and in "the innumerable nonsense drawings he delighted in, drawn for the children he loved and knew, private fun sent in letters to intimate friends, passing records of that ethereal humour which made him the most perfect playfellow in the world."¹

The same year, "Phyllis and Demophoön" was sent to the Water-colour Society. The story, taken from Ovid, tells how "Phyllis, amidst her mourning because Demophoön had forsaken her, was turned by the kind gods into an almond tree, and after, as he passed by, consumed with sorrow for her, she became once more visible to him, no less loving than of old time; and this was the first blossoming of the almond tree." The representation of the nude form, ideal though it was in this poetical rendering of the classic myth, had the misfortune to give offence in some quarters, and the picture, after being hung, was removed from its place in the exhibition. The artist, naturally indignant, withdrew from membership; a course in which he was supported by Sir Frederick Burton who also sent in his resignation; eighteen years later, however, both members were re-elected, and the connection with the Society was resumed.

Meanwhile the movement originated by the firm for the popularisation of beauty was taking root, and as early as 1864 "the shop" had to be enlarged. It was then that Morris regretfully left Red House and settled with the firm in Queen Square, Bloomsbury. Being on the spot, and able to devote all his time and energy to the work

¹ *British Contemporary Artists*, by W. Cosmo Monkhouse.

of production, in which he had the continued co-operation of Burne-Jones, Madox Brown, and Webb, he soon put the business on a prosperous footing. An important commission obtained in 1867 was the decoration of the Green Dining-room at South Kensington Museum. For this, Burne-Jones drew a series of fourteen figures for painted panels, representing the signs of the Zodiac and the Sun and Moon,¹ and the stained glass windows which were part of the scheme were also executed from his designs.

In his constant work for the firm, Burne-Jones soon obtained an extraordinary facility for composition. It is said that his power of visualising the subjects he had in his mind was such that, before he began to execute a design, he could always see it upon the blank paper as if it had been drawn in lines thereon.² It became his custom to have always a great number of pictures in hand at different stages of completion, working on that for which he felt in the mood, then perhaps putting it aside till greater experience had given him the power to tackle some difficult problem it presented,—taking it up again and carrying it a stage further, and then again perhaps laying it aside while some other work was being completed. It stands to reason, from this method of work, that the finished works of Burne-Jones, the earlier water-colours excepted, do not lend themselves

¹ The final painting of these panels from Burne-Jones's designs was done by Mr. Fairfax Murray.

² Preface to Catalogue of the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition 1899, by W. Cosmo Monkhouse.

to chronological classification, while the stages through which he passed in his artistic evolution are faithfully mirrored in the rapidly executed cartoons, the dates of which can in most cases be accurately ascertained. Some of the first produced for the firm had for their subject "The Song of Songs"; others designed in 1863 for Lyndhurst Church represented "The Martyrdom of St. Stephen," "The Battle of Beth-horon," "Elijah and the Prophets of Baal," and "The Deliverance of St. Peter from Prison."

In all the cartoons mentioned until now, the influence of the Pre-Raphaelites and of Madox Brown—the latter especially in the Lyndhurst windows—can be distinctly traced. Soon, however, an individual type asserted itself, a type first felt in the "Garland Weavers" of the South Kensington Museum Dining-room, in the "Days of Creation" and the "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego" designed for Middleton Cheney in 1870, and which finds its perfect expression in the "Samuel" and "Timothy" figures of the Vyner Memorial at Christ Church, Oxford, designed in 1872.¹

Other work belonging to the sixties, and distinctly characteristic of that period, is the series of drawings executed between 1865 and 1868 as illustrations to William Morris's great cycle of poems, *The Earthly Paradise*. It was at first proposed to bring the book out in one folio volume, and, if carried out as planned, there could have

¹ Mr. Aymer Vallance says that the other figures in this window were designed at an earlier period.

been no more worthy commemoration of a great and lifelong collaboration, for it was to have been adorned with about five hundred illustrations from designs by Burne-Jones, of all artists the one most capable of bearing his friend's thought company in its "hours of exquisite flight" from the world of to-day, to that No-man's-land of beauty and enchantment in which the imagination of both dwelt.

Burne-Jones's facility for design has already been noted; in drawing for illustrations it often happened that he was not entirely satisfied with his first rapid sketch, and "to save the time and labour involved in repeating the whole of the drawing, he adopted the plan of tracing the parts he wished to preserve and correcting the rest on the tracing paper—then if not satisfied he would trace the corrected tracing."¹ By this method he obtained the utmost precision and beauty of line, combined with that vitality and tenderness of touch which are never absent from his slightest sketches. Ruskin, who said of his outline that it was "the purest and quietest that is possible to the pencil," presented to the Ruskin School at Oxford, as "entirely masterful," the final tracings of the seventy "Cupid and Psyche" drawings, together with those done a little later for *The Hill of Venus*.

Drawings for *Pygmalion and the Image*, and for *The Ring given to Venus*, were also executed, and a great number of the "Cupid and Psyche"

¹ Preface to Burlington Fine Arts Club Catalogue, 1899, by W. Cosmo Monkhouse.

designs were actually cut in wood,¹ and a specimen sheet of four folio pages was printed at the Chiswick Press. It was found, however, that the scheme presented too many difficulties to be then carried out, and in 1868 it was abandoned, and the book brought out in the ordinary way, with only one design, "Three Women playing on Instruments," drawn by Burne-Jones and cut in wood by William Morris, on the title-page. Later, when the establishment of Morris's famous Kelmscott Press would have made the great edition possible, it was put aside, while other works, among them the *Chaucer*, were being produced; and just as a prose version by Morris of *The Hill of Venus* was about to be printed separately with the exquisite designs done by Burne-Jones twenty years before, the work of the Press was cut short by Morris's death. Of all those perfect drawings only one ever appeared in print, "Zephyrus bearing away Psyche," which was chosen as the frontispiece for Mr. S. C. Cockerell's history of the Kelmscott Press,²—the last book issued by it.

From the time that he gave his attention to these illustrations, the Cupid and Psyche myth took a great hold on Burne-Jones's imagination. A "Zephyrus and Psyche" and a "Cupid and

¹ Thirty-five of the designs were cut by Morris himself, and nine more by G. Wardle, G. F. Campfield, C. I. Faulkner, and Miss Elizabeth Burden.

² *A note by William Morris on his aims in founding the Kelmscott Press, together with a short description of the Press by S. C. Cockerell and an annotated list of the books printed thereat.*

Psyche" were painted in 1865, and another "Cupid and Psyche" in 1867. Two versions of "Pan and Psyche" were produced between 1869 and 1874, and a replica in oils of the first "Cupid and Psyche" in 1871-2; while between 1872 and 1881 a series was arranged to illustrate the entire story in a frieze for the drawing-room of the house built by Philip Webb at Palace Green for the Earl of Carlisle. A water-colour study of the whole scheme was done on a small scale, and enlargements were made from the drawings for *The Earthly Paradise* and painted in the first place by Mr. Walter Crane, whose assistance was rendered necessary by the many pressing demands on the artist's time; these were afterwards worked over in great part by Burne-Jones himself. As the conception of this fine piece of decorative art in reality belongs to the period now being considered, it can be described here. The frieze is divided into four sections of three panels each. The first scene is the finding of Psyche by the god of Love, when, seeking to punish her for the too great beauty which causes men to neglect the altars of Venus, he comes upon her asleep by a fountain. It illustrates the moment described in Morris's poem—

"And long he stood above her hidden eyes
With red lips parted in a god's surprise."

The next panel shows a sad procession escorting Psyche through a dreary wilderness to the place where Cupid has caused the oracle to order that she shall be abandoned to become the

bride of an unknown monster ; a slight girlish figure, she walks alone and goes to meet her fate with dignity—

“Afoot among her maids with head down bent.”

The bridal torch is carried before her, and flowers strewn in her path ; musicians playing a dirge precede and follow her, and the cortège is closed by her father and her sisters.

The next panel represents in one picture three incidents of the story : first, Psyche is seen borne away from the “drear rock’s brow” by Zephyrus ; then asleep on the ground before the “house of gold” where by Cupid’s order the gentle wind has laid her down ; then awake, timidly entering the house.

In the next section, the central panel shows Psyche listening to the voice of Love, who, unseen by her, promises her happiness “well worth her short-lived pains.” On either side of this panel are represented, first, the arrival of her sisters and her delight at showing them her happiness—

“ ‘Sisters,’ she said, ‘more marvels shall ye see
When ye have been a little while with me’ ”—

then their departure after the second visit, in which they have aroused her fears and curiosity and given her the fatal lamp.

The next section shows the working of their evil counsel. Psyche, holding the lamp, gazes enraptured on the vision which meets her eyes,—then in vain she kneels, and holds out supplicating hands as Love departs from her. Two

small spaces which in the angle of the room divide this section from the preceding one are filled with single figures illustrative of the lines—

“For in his face she saw the thunder nigh,”
and
“From out her sight he vanished like a flame.”

The hapless Psyche's wanderings then begin. She is seen first at the feet of Ceres, then of Juno; but the next stages of her cruel persecution by Venus are passed over, and in the following section she is seen going through the land of shadows on her way to Hades, to perform her last dread task. Carrying Venus's casket, she passes through the grey wilderness in which snares are set on all sides to cause her to speak the words which would be her undoing, but she walks through as though she were herself a shadow, and, like the dead, pays Charon to ferry her across the Styx, with a coin placed between her lips. Then, sitting high up in the boat as he rows it across the dark green river, she gazes at a vision of her father which rises from the water and implores her to bid the ferryman take him across also. And though at his words

“ . . . the tears run down apace
For memory of the once familiar face,”

she knows that this too is a snare to compass her destruction, and is held dumb by the greater love which impels her to the fulfilling of her task. This dark weird panel, with the fine action of the ferryman, the surging of the water, the pathetic speechless figure of Psyche, the wan ghost of her

father, is one of the finest passages of a fine work.

In the last panel, Psyche's return to the upper regions is seen; in the distance, while the boat leaves the shore, she is about to open the fatal casket; then, in the foreground, she is seen lying unconscious on the hard ground of rocky Tænarus, while a dark smoke rises from the open box. A third scene in the same picture shows her deliverance from all her sorrows. It is a magnificent vision of Love, with great wings outspread, his drapery swirling round him in the swiftness of his descent, raising in his arms the frail figure of Psyche who, scarce recovered from her swoon, gazes up at him with eyes in which love and worship mingle with fear; in the distance the Phoenix, who had seen and pitied her, and fetched Love to her rescue, flies away.

In a lunette under the second section, the consummation of the whole story is shown. Love and Psyche, led by Mercury, enter the presence of the gods, who advance to greet them, preceded by Hebe carrying the golden cup which is to bestow on Psyche the gift of immortality.

The story is told throughout with a warmth of feeling, an ideality, a sense of the hidden meaning of the beautiful old myth, which are far removed from the cold and conventional atmosphere which generally characterises pictures of mythological subjects. "Can these dry bones live?" is the question which presents itself as one gazes on most of the soulless representations of Venuses, Cupids, and Nymphs. It was reserved for the

two great masters of the English mythic school of painting to breathe into them the breath of modern thought on things spiritual; to make them speak our own language, and to show that they have indeed, now, as in the days of their birth,

“ . . . a heart within blood-tinctured, of a veined humanity.”

The drawings for *The Hill of Venus* were executed before the poem they were intended to illustrate had been actually written. The story is that which Wagner in *Tannhäuser* treated in a way which varies much from the mediæval original. It tells how “a certain man by strange adventure fell into the power of Venus, who repenting of his life with her, was fain to return to the world and amend all, but might not, for his repentance was rejected of men, by whomsoever it was accepted.” He joins a party of pilgrims who are going to Rome, and begs absolution from the Pope; but the Pope, when he hears his confession, recoils from him in horror, with the words—

“ . . . just so much hope I have of thee
As on this dry staff fruit and flowers to see ! ”

The pilgrim departs in despair and is no more heard of, but the next day it is found that the staff has blossomed, and the Pope learns how he has erred in assigning bounds to God's mercy. It is interesting to note the different aspects under which the old Suabian legend appealed to the poet and the painter. The setting of the story,

the passionate scenes in the Venusberg, and the strange conjunction of pagan mythology and mediæval Christianity appealed most to Morris. Burne-Jones, on the other hand, was more impressed with the mystical side,—the pilgrimage to Rome, the Pope, and the miracle.

For *Pygmalion and the Image* eleven drawings were done, and this subject also inspired a series of four works painted between 1868-79, and a small picture called "The Altar of Hymen," which represents Pygmalion and his Bride embracing in front of a lighted altar behind which sits Venus enthroned with Cupid between her knees. Only two pen-and-ink drawings were done for *The Ring given to Venus*, the story of the man who "on his wedding-day unwittingly gave his spousal ring to Venus, and for this cause trouble came upon him, till in the end he got his ring back again." One of these also became the subject of a never-finished water-colour, in which the bridegroom is seen, on the point of joining a group of merry-making wedding-guests, placing the ring for safety on the finger of the statue.

The position Burne-Jones had attained in 1870 is shown by an article on his work which Mr. S. Colvin wrote that year in *The Portfolio*. In it he answered the charges of affected mediævalism and eccentricity which were being brought against the Pre-Raphaelite movement, explained the change which had come over its spirit in its transition from sympathy with the religious aspirations of early art to sympathy with its æsthetic temper, and showed how the progress

of the school, both in poetry and painting, had proved that their art was "no sickly exotic, but a robust growth suited to the air of the times," and that "for all their sympathy with the archaic manner of expression, the things they had to express were no whit archaic, but modern, but classical, but perennial, and lovely for one generation no less than for another." "For poetry," he said, "this has been achieved by Mr. Morris. . . . And the work done by Morris has its pictorial analogue in the work done by Mr. Jones. To charge this with mediævalism or archaic quaintness to-day is mere ineptitude. It is work, though far enough from perfect, still catholic and central in character ; work inspired by Michel Angelo and Phidias just as much as by the early purists of Italy, by Homer just as much as by Chaucer and the romance writers of the middle age." He spoke of Burne-Jones's exquisite feeling for nature,—"He paints the quintessence of nature when nature is loveliest,"—and, comparing his work with that of other painters, said that it was to theirs, "what singing is to common talk, what poetry is to prose." "A flower painted by him," he continued, "is like a flower described by Keats, all the fragrance and colour and purity of it are caught and concentrated in the magic pencil strokes." Then, while admitting that in spite of gradual acquirement of power in the drawing of the figure, Burne-Jones showed a leaning towards a certain conventional adaptation of nature—"as, for instance, an elongation sometimes of the nether limbs that has more of grace than of truth

in it"—Mr. Colvin concluded:—"the sum of the whole matter is this, that in most of the works as yet produced by Mr. Burne-Jones there have been faults within the correction of any tyro, and that in all of them there have been beauties beyond the attainment of any modern master but himself."

CHAPTER VI

FAME

1870-1878

Move to "The Grange"—Mode of life—Silent period—"Love among the Ruins" and "The Hesperides"—Opening of the Grosvenor Gallery—"The Mirror of Venus"—"The Beguiling of Merlin"—"The Days of Creation"—"Fides"—"Spes"—"Caritas"—"Temperantia"—"The Seasons"—"Day" and "Night"—"Luna"—"Perseus and the Graiæ"—"Laus Veneris"—"Le Chant d'Amour"—"Pan and Psyche"—Other works of this period—Cartoons—"The Masque of Cupid"—Subjects from *The Romaunt of the Rose*—Illustrations for *The Æneid* and *The Story of Orpheus*—The Graham Piano.

FROM Great Russell Street, Burne-Jones had moved to Kensington Square, and in 1867 he finally settled at "The Grange,"—the old house in West Kensington where Richardson wrote his novels and entertained his famous friends. Here, with intervals spent at the country-house taken later at Rottingdean, he lived for the rest of his life, and, during those thirty years, nothing but severe illness was ever allowed to interrupt his work. To him, the starting of a new picture was always "a sufficient holiday," and in his home life and the companionship of his intimate friends he found all the relaxation he required. He hated railway journeys, and for that reason travelled but

rarely;¹ and although his wit and humour, his "entire and admirable loveableness," and his intellectual gifts, made him a favourite wherever he went, he cared little for society or for anything which took his time and thoughts from his work. Absorbed in the production of larger and more highly finished pictures than hitherto, and caring only to please that most exacting of all his critics which was himself, increasingly busy, too, with cartoons and illustrations for Morris, he ceased awhile from exhibiting, and, during the next seven years, the general public almost forgot his existence. Only once, when in 1873 two pictures were sent to the Dudley Gallery, was the silence of this period broken. These were the now famous "Love among the Ruins" and "The Hesperides."

"Love among the Ruins," with its beautiful colouring, fine composition and poetic charm, is one of Burne-Jones's greatest achievements, and one of those in which his personality found its fullest expression. It has been said that the feeling with which this picture is regarded can almost be taken as a test of the spectator's capacity for understanding and enjoying his work. It represents two lovers clinging together among the shattered columns of a palace; all around is ruin, desolation, a sense of departed glories, and a haunting loneliness as of the tomb; it is a strange

¹ Burne-Jones's only journeys abroad, after those already mentioned, were in 1871, when he saw Rome for the first time, in 1873, when he spent a fortnight in Florence and Siena with Morris, afterwards going on to Rome for a few days, and in 1878, when he went to Paris at Easter and to Switzerland in the summer.

meeting-place, and there is dread in the woman's eyes as they question—

“O Love! How came we here?
What do we in this land of death and fear?”

But the question dies on her lips before it is asked as it finds its answer in the clasp of loving hands.

“Ages past the soul existed,
Here an age 'tis resting merely,
And hence fleets again for ages,
While the true end, sole and single,
It stops here for is, this love-way,
With some other soul to mingle.”

These lines of Browning's, with their suggestion of the crumbling past, the “little strip of time” which is the present, the mysterious eternity which is to come, seem perfectly to express the artist's meaning. As in the Cupid and Psyche myth, he has pictured here the indestructibility of the soul, and its salvation through the power of love. The palaces and temples in which it sought satisfaction crumble around it, and their mouldering fragments disappear beneath the wild rose and the harebell; that which has been the solace of one age becomes the gloom and desolation of the next, but the answer to “the riddle of the painful earth” is found when at last

“L'amor che move il sole e l'altre stelle”

dawns upon the soul.¹

¹ The first idea of this picture is to be found in a little water-colour done about 1872 for Morris's manuscript copy of *Omar Khayyam*.

"Love among the Ruins" was exhibited in Birmingham in 1885, in Manchester in 1887, in the Guildhall in 1892, and at the New Gallery in 1892-3, whence it was sent to the Paris Exhibition of the Champ de Mars. A sad fate awaited it. It was entrusted for reproduction to a firm of art publishers, and, its texture having been mistaken for oils, it was covered, for photographic purposes apparently, with white of egg; as it was a water-colour, the effect was disastrous. Sir Philip Burne-Jones says, in words which contain a whole revelation of his father's character: "He showed little outward sign of the distress which I know he felt at the destruction of his work, but hastened back to London, (it was during one of his brief so-called holidays at Rottingdean), and within twenty-four hours of the receipt of the news, had, with his own hands, measured the ruined picture, and written to his colourman for a new canvas of the same size, upon which, as soon as it arrived, he set to work in oil, and never rested till he had reproduced the lost picture in the more permanent medium."¹

"The Hesperides" represents the daughters of Hesperus guarding, with the Dragon, the golden apples of the tree which Gê, (the Earth), had given to Hera on her marriage with Zeus. There is an early poem of Tennyson's, called *The Hesperides*, which appeared only in his 1830 volume, and which Burne-Jones had read with great delight.

¹ *The Magazine of Art*, 1900. Notes on some unfinished works of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart., by Sir Philip Burne-Jones, Bart.

The subjects of his pictures generally grew from "vague impressions left by forgotten poems," and possibly this one may have owed its origin to some lingering echo in his mind of that "Song of the Tree," which, with their father Hesperus shining above them, the maidens sing as they

" Watch it warily
Singing airily
Standing about the charmed root."

Here, in the secluded rose-garden, in the midst of the dense forest, clothed in long red robes which cling to them as Botticelli's draperies cling to his moving figures, they weave with a rhythmic motion their mystic dance around the tree. In the magic circle in which Past, Present and Future are for ever blending, these guardians of the sacred mysteries are symbolical of what woman, in mystic art, always represents—the Soul, "Psyche," or Divine Wisdom, "Sophia."

Both pictures are typical of Burne-Jones's interpretation of womanhood. Like Simon Ballanche, he would have answered the question "*Qu'est-ce que la femme?*" "*C'est l'initiation.*" Thus he understood her mission, and loved to paint her, fair and young and with holy eyes, light-hearted as these light-footed maidens, or serenely grave as the lady of the "Chant d'Amour," or with the remote and pensive beauty of the Beggar-Maid; always—with a few notable exceptions—the sibyl to whom all wisdom is revealed, the interpreter, the priestess, the one at whose bare feet all the treasures of the world are not worthy to be laid.

Sometimes indeed, he shows her in another rôle ; but even then she is the possessor of powers beyond the reach of mere human intellect—a witch, a sorceress, a soul fallen through commerce with the powers of evil to a deeper depth than is possible to man, and become his betrayer and seducer ; then indeed there is no hope for even the wisest of men, of whom Merlin—

“ . . . lost to life and use and name and fame ”—

is the type.

These two works passed almost unnoticed. Time went by, and though all over the country innumerable churches were being made beautiful by the windows Burne-Jones designed, these were always executed by “ Morris & Co.,” and the artist’s name did not appear. Therefore the world was little prepared for the surprise which awaited it when, on the 30th of April 1877, the doors of the Grosvenor Gallery were first opened, and the full blaze of his genius was revealed in eight superb pictures.

A month before this date, a letter from Rossetti had appeared in *The Times*, in which, writing on the subject of the projected exhibition, he said : “ Your scheme must succeed were it but for one name associated with it—that of Burne-Jones—a name representing the loveliest art we have.” Round this art, so original, so different from anything ever produced in modern times, a wild storm of conflicting opinions arose. Some endorsed Rossetti’s verdict, and to them on that day a new world of beauty was revealed, that world into

which Swinburne, in his exquisite *Dedication*,¹ had pleaded that his verses might find admission :—

“ In their wings though the sea-wind yet quivers,
Will you spare not a space for them there,
Made green with the running of rivers
And gracious with temperate air ;
In the fields and the turreted cities,
That cover from sunshine and rain
Fair passions and bountiful pities
And loves without stain ?

In a land of clear colours and stories,
In a region of shadowless hours,
Where earth has a garment of glories
And a murmur of musical flowers ;
In woods where the spring half uncovers
The flush of her amorous face
By the waters that listen for lovers,
For these is there place ?

Though the world of your hands be more gracious
And lovelier in lordship of things,
Clothed round by sweet art with the spacious
Warm heaven of her imminent wings,
Let them enter, unfledged and nigh fainting,
For the love of old loves and lost times ;
And receive in your palace of painting
This revel of rhymes.”

On minds of another class, a totally different impression was produced, and men who had not the faintest conception of the artist's aims, denounced his works as the outcome of a morbid imagination, decadent, effeminate and pessimistic.

¹ *Poems and Ballads*. Swinburne, 1866.

The pictures which caused so great a sensation were "The Mirror of Venus," "The Beguiling of Merlin," "The Days of Creation," "Fides," "Spes," "Temperantia," "A Sibyl" and "A Knight."

"The Mirror of Venus" represents a group of nine girls, who, wandering in a Peruginesque landscape, have come upon a forget-me-not-surrounded pool in whose clear surface, between the water-lily leaves, they behold their own beauty. Surprised and delighted, they are absorbed in self-contemplation,—all but two, who, gazing in the limpid depths, have seen, not themselves, but the reflection of the Goddess of Beauty herself, and, looking upwards in speechless adoration, see her standing among them, tall, stately, and gentle as a Madonna.

"The Beguiling of Merlin" had been worked on at intervals between 1870 and 1872, then abandoned, and recommenced on a fresh canvas about 1873.¹ While in the earlier "Merlin and Nimuë" Burne-Jones followed the story of the enchanter's death given in the *Morte d'Arthur*, this one, like Tennyson's poem, is taken from another version of the legend which tells how the wily Vivien (or Nimuë) imprisoned the magician in a tree by the power of the spell she had made him reveal to her. Tall and lithe, a beautiful snake-like being, her robe coiled round her in a

¹ The first version, with its exquisitely painted may-blossom, can be seen in the little gallery in the Garden Studio of "The Grange," to which the public is admitted on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

curious intricate way, she glides from her victim, carrying the stolen book. The subject is treated with a dramatic power which combines the most intense emotion with the calmest action. The criticism has been made that there is no suggestion in the figure of Merlin of the mighty wizard,—but it must be taken into consideration that he is here depicted when the vampire-woman has reduced the strength of his manhood to nothingness, and that he is bound and imprisoned by invisible means; his glazed eyes, feebly smiling mouth, and general limpness of attitude are necessary to express this utter helplessness. All about the scene the hawthorn blossom spreads its beauty, opposing its pure whiteness to the warm and glowing tones of the rest of the picture.¹

“The Days of Creation” was a subject which had occupied Burne-Jones’s thoughts for many years. He had first represented it in the small

¹ The following—from *The Romance of Merlin*—was given as the explanation of the picture in the New Gallery Catalogue: “It fell on a day that they went through the forest that is called the Forest of Broceliande, and found a bush that was fair and high, of white hawthorn, full of flowers, and there they sat in the shadow. And Merlin fell in sleep; and when she felt he was in sleep she arose softly and began her enchantments, such as Merlin had taught her, and made the ring nine times and nine times her enchantments. . . . And then he looked about him, and to him seemed he was in the fairest tower of the world and the most strong; neither of iron was it fashioned, nor steel, nor timber, nor of stone, but of the air without any other thing; and in sooth so strong it is that it may never be undone while the world endureth.”

purples, blues and greens slightly relieved with gold, is an absolute triumph.

"Fides" is a stately figure standing in a niche. She gazes intently on the steady flame burning from the lamp she bears in her right hand, while the left, round the wrist of which is coiled the serpent of divine wisdom, hangs at her side holding an evergreen branch. At her feet writhes the dragon of doubt, in flames powerless to hurt her. Above her head, surmounting the columns of the niche, figures of infants are represented playing with beads strung on a thread, symbolising the many forms of religion with which the children of men occupy themselves, and the great current of faith which runs through and unites them all.

"Spes" is a pendant to "Fides." She is represented by a girl who, chained by the ankles to her prison-cell, and bearing in one hand the apple blossom which signifies the eternal spring-time of hope, rises on tiptoe to touch with the other the blue mystery of heaven which her rapt gaze sees descending upon her captivity. While the colouring of "Fides" is gold and orange-red relieved with white, "Spes" is a glowing harmony of greens and blues.

The third Christian virtue, "Caritas," painted some years before, was not exhibited till much later. It is a fine composition, rich and full in tone, of a woman carrying two children in her arms while others cluster about her knees, seeking shelter in the folds of her ample draperies.

"Temperantia" is represented by a woman

set of water-colours already mentioned, in which no symbolism was attempted, and each stage of creation was depicted in a conventional way and as simply as possible. In 1873 he designed for the church of Middleton Cheney a window, repeated in 1874 for Tamworth, the subject of which was the vision seen by the three Children of Israel in the fiery furnace, when, according to tradition, all the works of creation passed before their eyes, glorifying God. The figures of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego¹ occupy the lower lights, and the six upper ones are filled by glorious figures of angels, supporting in their hands globes in each of which, as in a crystal, is seen the creation of the day represented. As each new day reveals a fresh work, the angel of the preceding one gives place to the new-comer, the flame on whose forehead symbolises the creative energy, so that, while the first light shows but one figure, the last includes the six, and beside these the angel of the seventh day is shown, crowned with myrtle and sitting at rest among the wild roses, playing on a seven-stringed instrument. The working out of these cartoons suggested their execution as a set of six pictures which, framed together, should form one harmonious whole, and this was the work now exhibited, a work as unique in conception as in execution, in which the balance of the various parts is exquisitely maintained, while the colour, passing from the almost neutral tints of the first day to the glory of the last, through an infinitely delicate gradation of

¹ The cartoons for the figures are at the Garden Studio.

“Autumn,” in deep crimson, sad and weary :—

“Laden Autumn here I stand
Worn of heart and weak of hand ;
Nought but rest seems good to me,
Speak the word that sets me free.”

“Winter,” the most beautiful of the four, calm and serene, garbed as a nun in black and white, stands absorbed in a book she holds in one hand while she warms the other at the fire which burns beside her :—

“I am Winter that doth keep
Longing safe amidst of sleep ;
Who shall say if I were dead
What should be remembered.”

“Day” was represented by a youth with lighted torch, standing in an open doorway through which is seen a castellated town, and calling on the world to awake :—

“I am Day, I bring again
Life and glory, love and pain.
Awake, arise, from death to death
Through me the world's tale quickeneth.”

“Night” is a sad-faced woman with smoking torch reversed, gently closing the door on the restless sea without :—

“I am Night, I bring again
Hope of pleasure, rest from pain ;
Thought unsaid 'twixt life and death
My fruitful silence quickeneth.”

In “Luna,” the crescent moon is suggested by a woman's figure, floating, veiled and mysterious, over the misty globe.

"Perseus and the Graiæ" was the first of a series designed for Mr. A. J. Balfour's drawing-room in Carlton Gardens. It was to consist of ten designs executed some in oils and others in gold and silver gesso on oak. Three small sets of water-colours showing the original scheme, and from which were developed both the water-colour cartoons belonging to Sir Alexander Henderson and Mr. Balfour's oil-paintings, can be seen at the Garden Studio. "Perseus and the Graiæ," in gesso, was the central subject of the first set, and here the artist broke absolutely fresh ground, both in the subject, which, though suggested by the writings of the old mythographers, had never received pictorial treatment, and in the originality of the process he invented for it. The three sisters of the Gorgons are represented groping blindly for the eye which Perseus, bending above them, has snatched for the purpose of forcing them to reveal to him the whereabouts of the sea-nymphs. The figure of the hero in shining silver armour, those of the gold-draped crouching women with their extended arms and flowing robes, stand out in very low and beautifully modelled relief upon the ground of light oak. The heads, hands, and feet are painted in a thin monochrome which blends admirably with the tones of the metal and the wood. The upper part of the panel is filled by a Latin inscription in gold letters. It is difficult to give in words any idea of the combined richness and simplicity of effect attained in this exquisite work.

"*Laus Veneris*," though not an illustration of

Swinburne's poem of that name, breathes the spirit of that "bitter love" which "is sorrow in all lands," of which the poet sang. It represents a weary queen, whose crown is too heavy for her brow, sitting, pale as death, in a flame-coloured robe, listening to the song of her four hand-maidens, while outside in the sunshine knights go riding by. The key to the meaning of the picture is supplied by the tapestry background in which Venus is seen on her wing-borne chariot, accompanied by Love, slaying with his pitiless arrows all he meets. Seventeen years before, a small water-colour of the picture had been executed, and though the arrangement and the scheme of colour are the same, the technical power and magnificent flow of line now revealed, had not at that time been attained.

Another picture, which also showed, by comparison with an early water-colour of the same subject, how completely the artist had now overcome the difficulties of his first period, was "Le Chant d'Amour," which bore as sub-title the refrain of an old Breton song—

"Hélas, je sais un chant d'amour
Triste ou gai, tour à tour."

The subject is a favourite one of the master's—the perpetual homage rendered by strength to pure womanhood. "There is no story," says M. de la Sizeranne, who has nothing but praise for this exquisite work, "there is nothing to guess, but everything to feel; the story here is the life of two hearts and a little air stirred by waves of

sound." The scene is on a flower-bordered terrace, where, in the evening light, a girl, kneeling on a cushion, plays on a little organ of the kind sometimes seen in early Italian paintings. Beside her, his back to the spectator, his head turned towards the lady, a steel-clad knight sits on the ground listening. On the opposite side of the picture, with gentle slow motion, the god of Passion, myrtle-crowned and crimson-robed, no longer the slayer, but reduced to happy subjection, kneels with closed eyes and folded wings, and gently works the bellows. Beyond the group the evening light falls softly on the sheep in the quiet meadow, and in the background is seen a town with walls and castles, while shafts of light streaming from the windows of a sacred building lead the eye upwards to her from whom the all-pervading harmony is radiating. Above is a narrow line of sky,—just enough to give the feeling of open air, of space and infinity, not enough to let the mind wander away from the subject. "The attitudes of the three figures," says the critic above quoted, "different enough to complete each other, similar enough for unity, tend towards that classic and Latin synthesis which can indeed be scorned in theory, but towards which in examining all fine works, one finds they have reverted. The pyramid is replaced on its base. Whichever way the gaze directs itself the lines bring it back to the centre and lead it up to the face of the immortal musician, to those lips which are about to part, to that melody which is unheard, but which fills everything like the in-

visible bell in the Angelus of Millet, to that harmony which one feels in every line and form of this vision, to the song of love."

"Pan and Psyche," with its vague reminiscences of Piero di Cosimo, is another example of the spiritual quality with which Burne-Jones knew how to interpret the fabulous tales of old, the myths in which the human soul, ever the same through all the ages, has embodied its deepest thoughts and aspirations. "Whatever I do in Art," Burne-Jones once said, "even if I deal with Greek or Norse legend, I treat it in the spirit of the Celt"; and it is this Celtic insight into the mysteries of life, united to his wide scholarship, which enabled him to make the old legends living to us, proving indeed that "no form is obsolete, no subject out of date, if the right man be there to rehandle it." Psyche, in despair at the loss of Cupid, has tried to drown herself, but in vain, for the river, like all nature, is bent on furthering her quest, and it gently carries her into the presence of the very god of Nature himself, who, kneeling on a rock and looking tenderly down at her, places his hand on her forehead as she gazes up into his face. Looking at this picture one feels the artist's thought was that of the poet—

"... nor soul helps flesh more, now, than flesh helps soul."

These pictures produced as great a sensation as those of the preceding year, and while *The Times* praised the "direct and determined protest" of Burne-Jones's art "against the coarser tendencies and vulgarities of the time," and described

him as "a painter who can walk in the ways of the earlier Renaissance with so stately and assured a step, and with so much passion and fervour of imagination, as well as such splendid mastery of colour," other critics saw only a further opportunity for angry or contemptuous ridicule. It is amusing, after all these years which have so completely reversed the verdict of that day, to find, in the pages of *Punch*, Burne-Jones and Whistler included in one sweeping condemnation. Mr. Comyns Carr has told us how his friend bore all the attacks which his sensitive nature had at first felt so acutely, and how "with a playful humour that would have surprised his censors, he would sometimes affect to join the ranks of his assailants, and wage a mock warfare upon his own ideals," amusing his friends by making comic drawings "in the style of Rubens" of the subjects to which he declared he was henceforth going to devote himself, in order to satisfy the popular taste.

It was inevitable that the appearance of so individual an art should excite opposition, and the hostility it met with, like that which had greeted the first appearance of the Pre-Raphaelites, was really only a tribute to its originality. Besides, the Pre-Raphaelite battle had long been fought and won, and the public was a very different one from that which Rossetti, Millais, and Holman Hunt had been obliged to face thirty years before. An ever-increasing circle, permeated with the writings of Ruskin, with the poetry of Rossetti, Morris, and Swinburne, was ready to

welcome this further development of the movement, and to accept enthusiastically Ruskin's authoritative statement when he said: "The work of Burne-Jones is simply the only artwork at present produced in England, which will be received by the future as classic in its kind—the best that has been or could be. These works will be immortal, as the best things the modern nineteenth century in England could do. . . ." Little by little the number of his admirers increased, little by little his antagonists were subdued, and, if not drawn over to his side, at least silenced; and it was the dumb feeling of a great multitude which was expressed by George Eliot when she wrote to him: "I want, in gratitude, to tell you that you make life larger and more beautiful to me."

Many other works besides those actually exhibited must be mentioned as belonging to this period. Chief among these are the cartoons for stained glass. Those for the Vyner memorial at Christ Church, Oxford, and the two companion designs for the same church representing "St. Catherine" and "St. Cecilia"—in all three of which the figures stand out light upon a dark ground—the "Angeli Laudantes" and "Angeli Ministrantes" of Salisbury, "The Last Judgment" put up at Easthampstead, and the Middleton Cheney windows, were executed, as well as an immense number of others, between 1870 and 1878, after which date the firm ceased to undertake orders for any but modern edifices. Burne-Jones had at this time given up the practice, so

strictly adhered to at first, of indicating the lead-lines in the designs, and he was also able to leave the colouring entirely in the hands of Morris and his staff.

Among other works were two never-finished designs representing the vision of "The Masque of Cupid" seen by Britomart in the enchanted chamber of the house of Busirane. The study for the three heads of Amoret and her persecutors—

"th' one Despight
The other cleped Cruelty by name,"

is particularly interesting by the power it displays over a wide range of facial expression. Very rarely did Burne-Jones draw a face expressive of evil passions; here he has done it, and with a mastery which recalls Leonardo. The "faire dame" who

"like a dreary spright
Cald by strong charmes out of eternall night
Had Deathes own ymage figurd in her face,
Full of sad signes fearfull to living sight,
Yet in that horror shewd a seemly grace,"

was of a type he loved to depict,—the last line especially of the description being characteristic of the manner in which his heroes and heroines maintain under the most appalling circumstances their godlike dignity of demeanour.

It is noteworthy that although the spirit of Burne-Jones's art is so closely akin to that of Spenser's, these two compositions are the only ones which owed their inspiration to the author of *The Faery Queen*. They were intended for mural

decoration, and it is much to be regretted that they were never carried out as such.

Another very interesting series was a set of designs for needlework executed between 1874 and 1880 for Lady Lowthian Bell. The theme chosen was *The Romaunt of the Rose*, and the subjects represented are "The Pilgrim at the Gate of Idleness," "The Wall of the Garden of Idleness," "Love leading the Pilgrim," "William de Loris dreaming,"¹ "Danger," "Shame," "The Procession of the Joys of Life," and "The Finding of the Rose." Morris designed a rose background for some of these subjects and also dyed the wools, and the embroidered panels, worked from photographic enlargements of Burne-Jones's drawings, form a frieze about three feet wide and seventy feet long above the oak panelling of a dining-room specially planned by Philip Webb for their reception at Rounton Grange, Northallerton. Two water-colour drawings which were done for the second subject show the Pilgrim gazing at the figures, here represented by statues but in the *Kelmscott Chaucer* by paintings,² of the ills of life: Hate, Felonye, Vilanye, Coveitwyse, Avarice, Envye, Sorowe, Elde, Pope-holy (or hypocrisy), and Povert, which

"With gold and azure over alle
Depeynted were upon the walle."

For others of the series exquisite pencil studies

¹ William de Loris was the French author of *The Romaunt of the Rose* which was partly translated by Chaucer.

² Eighteen illustrations of *The Romaunt of the Rose* were done for the *Kelmscott Chaucer*.

were made; amongst these must be specially mentioned "Love and Beauty," "Courtesie and Franchise," "Richesse and Largesse," and the magnificent "Love leading the Pilgrim"¹ of 1877, one of the finest, in quality of line and composition as well as in charm of poetic feeling, of all Burne-Jones's drawings. Love is represented as a spirit, a guardian angel crowned with roses, round whose head all the birds of the air make sweet music—

"He semede as he were an aungel
That down were comen fro hevene clere,"

and so intent is the Pilgrim on following him, that he does not even see the smiling valley with its winding river, nor the road which leads to the fair city; but, with his hand in that of Love, he climbs the rocks, and struggles through the thorny places, happy with that vision in front of him, anxious only to follow.

Later, two pictures developed from these designs were painted in oils for Mr. Connal and exhibited at the New Gallery in 1893. These were "The Pilgrim at the Gate of Idleness," and "The Heart of the Rose," the latter varying considerably from the first conception of the subject. In the drawing for needlework the Pilgrim is represented gazing upon the face of the maiden issuing from a large rose, while in the oil-painting she is enthroned in the centre of the rose-bush, and the Pilgrim is led by Love into her presence.

¹ This subject, though not an actual illustration of *The Romaunt of the Rose*, owes its inspiration to it. It is also called "The Pilgrim of Love."

A painting of "Love leading the Pilgrim" was also begun, and was shown in 1897 with a quotation from Swinburne appended to its title in the catalogue :—

"Love that is first and last of all things made,
The light that moving has man's life for shade."

This work bore a dedication to the friend who thirty years before—

"For the love of old loves and lost times"—

had inscribed his first verses to the artist.¹

Other notable drawings were those done to illustrate a folio manuscript of the *Æneid*, of which Morris himself wrote and ornamented six books before pressure of other work caused it to be laid aside. Another series of drawings, "The Story of Orpheus," was made for an unpublished poem by Morris, and was used many years later for the decoration of the famous "Graham Piano," around which the designs were painted in small circular medallions. The lid was adorned on the inside with a figure representing Earth,—*"Terra Omniparens,"*—a woman seated on a mound from which spring the vine and the briar among whose curving branches a multitude of infants, white, black and brown, disport themselves. On the outside, a poet in mediæval attire was painted, gazing, through the opening formed by a winged circle, at a vision of his ideal from whom the words *"ne oublie,"* inscribed on a scroll, descend to him.

¹ —and whose latest volume, (September 1904), *A Channel Passage and other Poems*, is dedicated to the memory of Burne-Jones and William Morris.



UNIV. OF MICH.

LOVE LEADING THE PILGRIM

been illustrated for *The Earthly Paradise* in 1867-8, and at the same time four pictures from it were begun; these, worked on at intervals for several years, were exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1879. In a form "as perfect after its own kind as the form of a Petrarchian sonnet," Burne-Jones has expressed in this series a sequence of thought on human aspiration. He has embodied it in the old legend, and has told the story with a simplicity and directness which make its comprehension easy even to those ignorant of classic lore. In the first picture, which may be taken as the prologue, the young sculptor is standing before a pedestal, lost in thought of the ideal conception to which he would give form. Unnoticed, the fair Cretan maidens pass his doorway, and the sculptured group of the Graces, which stands in the background, represents the art to which he has attained, but which fails to satisfy his soul. The second represents the limitation of human power: the artist has done his utmost, he has reached the barrier beyond which no mortal effort can carry him, and, with the sadness of impotent longing, he lays down his tools. The third shows the completion of human work by divine power. Pygmalion has gone to the temple to pray, and, human passion having withdrawn itself, the divine presence enters, and the goddess of Love herself, borne on a cloud, doves fluttering beneath her feet, heaven's sphere-like radiance about her head, with uplifted right hand sends the thrill of life quivering through the marble limbs. Half woman, half statue yet, with

bewildered soul gazing from the awakening eyes, Galatea bends forward with swaying motion, and her outstretched hands find support on the raised arm of the divinity. In the fourth picture human aspiration attains divine realisation, and, in an inner room, Pygmalion kneels before the new-found woman who yields her hands to the worshipping hands which clasp them. Her wondering eyes gaze far away with that look which all Burne-Jones's women wear,—a look as of a being from another sphere, "astray in the pathway of human existence," and seeing beyond the veil of mortality; that look gives even to this picture of human attainment that sense of the unattainable, that hint of the infinite beyond, which is the quintessence of Burne-Jones's art. It is the same feeling which in his architectural arrangements, causes him always to "lend a yonder to all ends," to "make a beyond by building a barrier," showing mysterious vistas through narrow colonnades or half-open doors, and keeping the imagination ever on the alert by a suggestion of something which eludes it. Over and over again he asserts, by every means in his power, that however fair the time and place, there is something fairer beyond, that things mortal are incomplete and therefore tinged with sadness, that the quest of the soul, in its strange nostalgia of the infinite, lies ever before it, that, in fact, "a man's reach" must still "exceed his grasp"—

"Or what's a heaven for?" . . .

The setting of the story is in the style of the early Renaissance, a quaint combination of the

classical and mediæval, so skilful that it produces no sense of incongruity, but simply serves to transport the spectator far from time and place into a region of abstract ideas in which archæological accuracy is of no account. The colouring is very much more subdued than in previous works, and in this respect a change can be noticed at this period. The Venetian influence, felt so strongly at first through Rossetti, had, under the determination to attain perfection of draughtsmanship, been giving way to that of severer masters of line, and research for ideal form and dignified design is now seen to take the ascendancy over the passion for luxurious colour. Beauty is looked for in balance and harmony of line rather than in charm of colour or subtle arrangement of light and shade, and the brilliancy of the earlier works is replaced by a subdued harmony in which the most delicate tones are blended in a silvery half-light; the range of this unique palette can be judged by a comparison between the almost monochrome "Annunciation," or "The Golden Stairs," and the intense but restrained glory of colour of "King Cophetua" and of the "Briar-Rose" series.

The "Annunciation" was exhibited the same year as "Pygmalion." Here the pale, slight Virgin stands beside a well in the outer court of a dwelling built in the style of the Renaissance; above the rounded archway which forms the entrance a bas-relief represents on one side the Temptation and on the other the Expulsion from Paradise,—that first act in the drama of humanity,

which, inscribed on the house of life, has caused the exiled soul who moves about its narrow passages to wear in her eyes a look in which the sorrow of all time seems to be reflected. But now another voice than that of the Tempter is about to speak from the tall tree which grows beside the portal. Poised in arrested descent, the angel who bears to the daughter of Eve the message of reconciliation, raises his hands in blessing as he pauses for a moment before breaking the stillness with the words of the angelic salutation. It is interesting to compare this picture with the early ones of the same subject: the "Bodley Triptych" and its replica at St. Paul's, Brighton,¹ the "Nativity Triptych," the small water-colour in which the Virgin presses a dove to her breast as she listens to the angel's words, and the one in which the great mediæval angel with rustling wings appears before the praying Virgin.² The Rossettian influence which marks all these has now entirely vanished, but another is apparent,—that of the early Christian art, which, springing from the union of the Græco-Roman and the Oriental, produced the stately mosaics of old Byzantium, Ravenna, and Padua. The perpendicular character of the composition, broken by the arched doorway, and by the curved wings, bent head and raised hands of the angel, the lines of the Madonna's dress, the deep folds of the angel's draperies falling straight to his downstretched feet, the poise of the Virgin's head, all recall in a marked manner that Byzantine

¹ See p. 57.² See pp. 63-5.

art which, next to "Celtic things," was Burne-Jones's best-loved study.

"The Golden Stairs," named first "The King's Wedding," and then "Music on the Stairs," is, like the "Annunciation," a harmony in white. It belongs to that class of pictures which illustrate no particular legend, have no particular symbolic meaning, but, like beautiful music, captivate the senses, and transport the beholder into a realm of peace and beauty. It represents a procession of girls descending a spiral golden staircase. They are clothed in simple white garments and crowned with leaves. Some hold cymbals, others tambourines or flutes, others long trumpets, "such as those which, held in the hands of angels, gleam like sunbeams against the blue of Fra Angelico's skies. Their bare feet press the golden steps, and their bare fingers the silver strings of the lutes, or the stops of the flutes. And the steps shine and reflect the feet, and the chords vibrate and reflect the souls of the gentle musicians. Their path is strewn with branches, like the threshold of a church on Palm Sunday. . . . Here and there beneath the brows, eyes gaze out beyond the frame, beyond the halls, beyond the building, perhaps beyond life itself. . . ." ¹ M. de la Sizeranne has drawn a beautiful comparison between the spirit of this picture and that of our age of keen business competition, with its mad fratricidal struggle for fame and fortune so dramatically pictured by M. Rochegrosse in another famous picture.

¹ *Ruskin et la religion de la beauté*, by R. de la Sizeranne.

"Dies Domini" was developed from part of the design for the Easthampstead window.¹ In this, the round opening above the central light is filled by a figure of Christ, who, descending from heaven on the wings of angels, His right hand raised in judgment, with sad, reproachful face, points with His left hand to His pierced side. The picture is a circular water-colour in which, instead of the starry firmament as a background, space is filled with legions of the heavenly host, the idea of whose multitude is magnificently suggested by the rustling forest of wings among which glimmer like stars the soft radiances shining from the unseen heads. The swiftness of Christ's coming is shown by the draperies which, borne upwards in the wind of His descent, fill the upper part of the composition. Only the faces of the four nearest angels are seen,—faces of intense spiritual beauty. The scheme of colouring is very simple, a harmony of blue and of ivory flesh tones. The wings and the eyes of the angels are of the blue of the firmament, and so are the draperies whose grand lines give the picture such a decorative character.

"The Mill," an oil-painting begun about 1870, but not exhibited till 1882, and recently left to the nation, represents three graceful figures dancing to music played on a stringed instrument by a fourth. The background, formed by a mass of mill-buildings seen on the other side of the stream in which figures are bathing, is very characteristic of the art of Burne-Jones in its delightful complexity.

¹ See p. 112.

"The Feast of Peleus" is a long picture of small dimensions, which represents, in a skilful composition of nineteen figures, the disastrous moment when Discord threw the apple inscribed "To the Fairest" on the table spread for the marriage feast of Thetis and Peleus,—that fatal deed whose consequences culminated in the Trojan War. Zeus, from his central place, raises his hand in reprobation; beside him, o'ershadowed by the eagle's wing, cower the bride and bridegroom; of the five goddesses present, three have risen, and with characteristic gestures stretch forth their hands to claim the prize; Hermes, holding it, reads the words on the scroll; Apollo, distress in his eyes, strikes his lyre in a vain effort to restore harmony, while Bacchus, Mars, and Pluto cast angry glances on the snake-crowned, bat-winged evil one, who, her mission accomplished, shrinks away. Ceres, in terror, and sad Proserpine keep their places, while in the foreground, Love, who is occupied in spreading the bridal couch, and the Fates, who are spinning beside it, pause for a moment in their tasks as they too gaze in dismay on the retreating figure; only the Centaurs, unconcerned, continue their service. Beyond, a wooded hillside slopes down to the blue sea, which, bordered on both sides by bays and promontories, stretches away to the horizon. The table is covered with a white cloth, and spread with fruit, bread, and cups of nectar. It is a glowing canvas of infinite charm,—a Greek myth seen with mediæval eyes, and painted with all the skill of a later century.

"The Feast of Peleus" had first been thought out as a subsidiary picture for a large composition dealing with *The Tale of Troy*, for which were also designed "Venus Concordia," "Venus Discordia," and four fine panels of "Fortune," "Fame," "Oblivion," and "Love." Large unfinished paintings of the two contrasting Venus subjects are at the Garden Studio, and the beauty of the designs and the charm of the finished parts of the "Venus Concordia," make one regret that these were among the many works left unfinished by the master's hand.

From the design of "Fortune" was developed "The Wheel of Fortune," Burne-Jones's favourite finished oil-painting, which, in its sombre grandeur and tragic intensity, as well as in the conception of the figures, recalls Michel Angelo.¹ The goddess, a gigantic, passionless figure, stands beside the massive wheel to which human destinies are bound. Slowly and inexorably her hand regulates its motion, and the slave, still fettered, the king whose frail sovereignty is typified by his transparent crystal sceptre, and the laurel-crowned poet, are each borne in turn to the summit and depth of destiny. The vision looms immense, high above the little works of man, his crumbling palaces, and fallen temples. The goddess is nearly the height of the picture, while the wheel is taken beyond the frame both top and bottom, and the illusion of its size thus immeasurably in-

¹ There is a smaller version of this subject, in which Fortune is represented seated upon the Wheel, instead of standing beside it.

creased. In this fine harmony of warm shadows and steely lights, Burne-Jones has expressed the ideas of "gradual and irresistible motion of rise and fall—the *tide* of Fortune, as distinguished from instant change or catastrophe;—those of the connection of the fates of men with each other, the yielding and occupation of high place, the alternately appointed and inevitable humiliation:—and the fastening, in the sight of the Ruler of Destiny, of all to the mighty axle which moves only as the axle of the world."¹

In strong contrast to the twilight tones of this canvas was "The Hours," begun about 1870, and painted—like the "Feast of Peleus," which was commenced two years later—with a wealth of joyous colour. The occupations of the day are represented by six maidens sitting in line on a sculptured seat.

"King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid" is closely allied in feeling to the "Chant d'Amour." Both represent, in an atmosphere of music, the bending down of material strength before "the Beauty of the Soul." Clad in a grey dress which scarcely covers her, the beggar-maid sits enthroned, and her rust-red hair makes a halo to her pure young face. She is pale, and her eyes look as if the soul within were wondering at its imprisonment in mortal flesh. In one hand she holds flowers, and her bare and perfect feet, white as ivory, are reflected in the shining metal floor; below, uncrowned by his own hands, his magnificent head thrown back as he gazes entranced upon her face,

¹ *The Art and the Pleasures of England.* Ruskin.

sits the king in mute adoration. Above, in the gallery, two choristers are singing, and thus the beauty of sweet sound is added to all that love, and art, and wealth can bring, to glorify the chosen one. Beyond the singers, just above the head of the maiden, a vista of wood and sky heightens in a magical manner the effect of the scene. The architectural features of the composition add wonderfully to its impressiveness, while its beauty of colour is beyond description. Sent in 1889 to the Paris International Exhibition, it called forth the greatest admiration, and M. de la Sizeranne has told us that the sight of it caused many a young enthusiast to cross the Channel, and "discover English art." When first exhibited in 1884 at the Grosvenor Gallery, *The Times* expressed a hope that this work, "not only the finest work that Mr. Burne-Jones has ever painted, but one of the finest pictures ever painted by an Englishman," might be secured for the nation. The wish was fulfilled, when, after the painter's death, a subscription was raised to buy the picture from the executors of the Earl of Wharnccliffe for the National Gallery of British Art.

The monochrome "Wood-Nymph," seated in a tree, belongs to the same year as "King Cophetua," and with this picture of repose must be mentioned one of undulating motion, painted a few years earlier, "A Sea-Nymph," with red-gold hair, playing with fishes in a conventional sea,—a work strongly reminiscent of Pompeian art.

In 1885, Burne-Jones, who had never sent his work to the Royal Academy, was, without his

knowledge, elected an Associate of that body. He showed his appreciation of the honour by sending to the 1886 exhibition the Leonardesque picture, of uncanny charm and magnificent workmanship, entitled "The Depths of the Sea":—a mermaid, unconscious that her clasp has killed her mortal lover, bearing his body through the rocky passage which leads to her dwelling, with a haunting smile of exultation on her fair elf-like face. The frame bore the inscription,—"*Habes tota quod mente petisti, infelix.*" It is a picture in which the human interest is combined in an extraordinary way with the fantastic, and the scene has the convincing quality which none but a great imaginative painter could have given it. Here the problem of expressing at the same time the descending movement of the figures and the up-bearing power of the water is solved with consummate mastery, while not less wonderful is the rendering of the down-filtering light and the painting of the bubbles which rise to the surface, and of the pebbles which lie on the ocean floor. This was the only picture Burne-Jones ever sent to the Academy. He felt the environment of so many conflicting styles to be uncongenial to his art, and in 1893 resigned his Associateship, without further availing himself of its privileges.

Other beautiful works of 1886 were "Flamma Vestalis," a girl in blue draperies, painted from the artist's daughter; "Sibylla Delphica," in which a priestess in orange-coloured robes is reading the oracle from leaves of the sacred laurel; and "The Morning of the Resurrection"

which, with two side panels representing "The Annunciation," adorns the church of St. Peter, Vere Street.¹

In this picture the almost equal spacing of the four vertical figures and the character of the draperies is particularly Byzantine. It is almost a monochrome, and the moment represented is that immediately preceding the recognition of the Risen Lord by Mary Magdalene. She is turning towards Him as He stands behind her, a figure of quiet dignity seen in profile against the entrance of the sepulchre. Within it, sitting at the head and foot of the tomb, two angels make the ancient sign of adoration, covering the mouth with the hand; the Lord still wears mortal garb, and their awe is mixed with pity for human suffering as they gaze upon Him before whom in Heaven they veil their faces. What the Christ-ideal was to Burne-Jones, and how earnestly he strove to express it, may be gathered from the words written to a friend shortly before his death: "The more I recall the efforts I have made to express the face of Christ, the more discontented I am with them. I do not think there is one which can be looked upon as anything but a failure. If anyone in our day could realise all that we think or mean by it, I believe it would be Rossetti."²

In "The Garden of Pan" two lovers are sitting

¹ In the same church a particularly fine window by Burne-Jones represents "The Entrance into Jerusalem."

² *Five Great Painters of the Victorian Era*, by Sir Wyke Bayliss.

together listening to the piping of the sylvan god. This was one of the last pictures to be exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery. A split having occurred among the directors, the New Gallery was opened in 1889 under the direction of Mr. Comyns Carr and Mr. C. Hallé, and it was there that henceforth Burne-Jones exhibited his works.

In 1888 two subjects were painted for St. John's Church, Torquay,—“The Nativity,” and “A King and a Shepherd led by Angels to Bethlehem.” The same year “The Bath of Venus,” begun about 1872, was exhibited for the first time at Glasgow; the goddess, attended by beautifully draped women playing on stringed instruments, is shown descending a flight of steps to the water.

The origin of the “Perseus” series has already been mentioned. The beginning of the story is told in “The Call of Perseus,” in which two scenes are depicted in one picture: first, in the middle distance, Perseus in deep dejection seated on the ground, the veiled figure of a woman bending over him; then, in the foreground, his startled recognition of Athene who stands before him superb and inspiring, holding the invincible short sword and the mirror with which he is to accomplish his task. The second subject, “Perseus and the Graiæ,” first executed in gesso,¹ was repeated several times. In the cartoon the figures are surrounded by an arid desert, in the oil, by an ice-bound land of mist and snow, and in either case the landscape of the dreary region which “the sun never looks upon with his beams

¹ See p. 107.



PERSEUS AND THE GORGONS

UNIV. OF MICH.

flight, and, at the same time, putting the head in the bag, while the Gorgons, rising in the air, try in vain to catch their unseen assailant.

The cartoon only for "Atlas and Perseus" was executed. Here, in illimitable space, the giant towers—a marble statue—bearing the starry globe of the heavens, and gazing reproachfully at the receding figure of Perseus, who, in passing, has held up before him the terrible head. This was to have been followed by a double picture, finally carried out as two separate ones, "The Rock of Doom" and "The Doom Fulfilled."

In the first of these it is evening, and, in the background, lights are beginning to glimmer in the sea-girt town. Almost in the centre of the picture a pillar of rock rises from the green waves, and on one side of it stands Andromeda, nude, chained by one arm, motionless in her resignation, her bent head alone expressive of what is passing in her mind. On the other side of the rock, swift as the seagulls which skim the waves behind him, one winged foot just touching the water, the Medusa head swinging in the bag slung on his arm, his attitude expressive at once of his haste to reassure and save, and his fear of causing alarm by his sudden appearance, Perseus approaching removes his helmet of darkness; and the moment the artist has chosen to paint is that first glance into each other's eyes of the two beings whom fate has led to this strange meeting-place. The picture is a very characteristic one. The Andromeda is a fine example of Burne-Jones's method of



THE ROCK OF DOOM

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hance the happiness of the present. Heroism has vanquished adverse destiny, and in this new Garden of Eden, the only dangerous thing is that dead face which in the hands of the hero has become a weapon of defence. Here the apples fall softly in the long grass, and tall columbines and little blue pansies grow beside the well, as in the mellow evening light, Andromeda, robed in the colours of these flowers, leans her lovely profile over the water to see, mirrored in its calm surface, "that death she lived by." And while she looks, her lover, fearful of danger to her even from that calm reflection, clasps her hand, and fixes his anxious gaze on her bent head. The three faces are seen repeated in the clear surface, a subtle method of still further emphasising, as in "The Mirror of Venus," that intensity of expression which was the artist's aim. The composition here is particularly admirable, the grouping of the heads, the placing of the hands, the lines of the figures, everything serving to fix the attention on the centre of interest.

It is interesting to know that James Russell Lowell considered the Perseus series "the finest achievement in art of our time or of any time."

Distinct from this series, but related to it by its subject, is the large "Danaë and the Brazen Tower."¹ It is an upright, narrow picture, in which, through a tall open door, beyond a cobbled court, Acrisius is seen superintending the building of the tower. White-robed, surrounded by his guards, he stands on the threshold, like a priest

¹ Also called "The Tower of Brass."

awaiting the victim he is to sacrifice. In the foreground, very fair against the dark cypress, as she stands in her flame-coloured mantle by the massive door in the palace garden, the slight frail being round whom inexorable fate is drawing its net, unconscious of her doom, gazes curiously at the strange construction. Her attitude, as she gathers up her mantle with one hand to continue on her way, and yet pauses, with her other hand raised to her chin, looking a moment longer, is wonderfully expressive; and the two parts of the composition, built up almost entirely of vertical lines, are skilfully connected by the curved lines of the paved court which lead the eye from the little patch of ground where the sad irises grow round Danaë's feet, to the steps of the prison which awaits her. "Danaë" presents a striking instance of the psychological moment which in the choice of his subjects appealed to Burne-Jones. In the semi-abstract region in which his creations move, "to exist in bodily presence is almost to be doing" and "to look is to live," for "emotion dominates thought and action, and deeds are but the accessories of life." Scarcely ever is the moment of action depicted: Burne-Jones chooses rather to show the soul under the conditions which are leading to it, to tantalise and mystify by the surroundings in which he places his personages, and to leave the rest to the imagination. What other painter would have thought of representing Danaë thus, still in maiden liberty, roaming in her father's palace? And what other painter, had he chosen that moment, could have invested

it with such charm and pathos, and with such a suggestion of unyielding fate? In the same way, when in the "Briar Rose" series he sets himself to represent the legend of the Sleeping Beauty, he leads us from the outer border of that world of silence where he who is to break the spell is just setting his foot, through the charmed wood and the council-room and the garden court, through the still passages and narrow doorways, right on to that moment of awakening in the rose bower which is the climax of the story,—but he does not show us the climax: he opens up the road to the imagination, takes it to the verge beyond which he considers pictorial expression should not attempt to go, and then leaves it to continue on its way alone; and this power of stimulating the imagination without ever satiating it, is one of the fascinations of Burne-Jones's art.

The legend of the Sleeping Palace was one which had early thrown its glamour over him. In the first days of the firm he had represented it on a set of tiles for Mr. Birket Foster. Later, the Sleeping Beauty had been painted in water-colour on vellum, and about 1870, he started a series of three pictures, never completely finished, in oils; then a larger set, including a fourth subject, was begun, and this, worked on at intervals from 1870 to 1890, was purchased by Messrs. Agnew, and, after being exhibited at their gallery, passed into the possession of Sir Alexander Henderson. In its final home at Buscot Park, it was supplemented by intervening panels, painted by Burne-Jones, which make the scheme of decora-

tion round the room a continuous one, and immensely increase the spectator's illusion that he is indeed roaming with the prince in the enchanted labyrinth. He wanders first in the dim outskirts of the charmed wood: then, in the first picture, "The Briarwood," he enters the dense thicket where—in the words of Morris—

"The fateful slumber floats and flows
About the tangle of the rose."

Here, in a magnificently composed group, lie the knights of many lands, overcome by a death-like slumber in the quest which was not for them; and the briar, the one moving, living power in that strange place, has coiled itself about them and, as though they slept in a cathedral vault, has lifted their shields high above their heads. The little finches sleep on the branches; there is not a stir of air or sound; and upon this silent scene breaks the destined Knight,—a splendid figure, armed cap-à-pie, sword drawn in readiness for any encounter, keen eyes beneath the calm pale brow, firm-set mouth showing the dauntless spirit,—type of the thinker, the reformer, the man who has an ideal before him, and is awake and free, while those around him lie dreaming old dreams, shackled by the ties and conventions of the centuries:—

"But lo, the fated hand and heart,
To rend the slumbrous curse apart."

The tone of the picture is dark and rich; gloom and terror pervade it. Onward, the wood gets

less dense ; then we come to the precincts of the palace, the first sign of human habitation, a curtain drawn before an unseen entrance ; passing on, we enter " The Council Chamber," where

" The threat of war, the hope of peace,
The kingdom's peril and increase,
Sleep on and bide the latter day
When Fate shall take her chains away."

Here sits the old white-bearded king crowned with a tiara and arrayed in almost pontifical robes ; his unconscious fingers still hold the parchment he was considering when the spell fell upon the palace. Beside him sleep his ministers and courtiers—the statesman with his diplomatic smile, the treasurer whose anxious grasp still holds the purse, the general in his armour, and many others, while through the curtained background can be seen glimpses of sleeping guards—and everywhere, unopposed, wreathing itself about the sleepers, and the throne, and the unturned hour-glass, its lovely curves and exquisite blossom beautifying everything, the magic rose encroaches. From the council chamber, we pass into " The Garden Court "—the subject omitted in the smaller series—on one side of which is a fountain, and on the other a loom. Till now, only men have been seen ; here there are only girls :—

" The maiden pleasance of the land
Knoweth no stir of voice or hand,
No cup the sleeping waters fill,
The restless shuttle lieth still."

In attitudes of perfect grace and robed in

softest colours, the sleepers sit or recline. One, who had just thrown the shuttle before falling asleep, leans forward on the web; another is seated on the ground, with her head on the knees of a third, who rests against the framework of the loom; three others sleep beside the fountain near the pitchers they were filling; and the coils of the giant briar, like an ever-recurring *leitmotif* linking together the four pictures, twine about the group, while the dancing sunbeams, which for a hundred years have marked the unrecorded hours on the rose-encircled sun-dial, play on the greeny-grey walls of the buildings in the background.¹

Following the rose onward, in the next panel, through a doorway and down some steps, we come upon the ashes of a grate long cold, and beside it, little familiar objects—the cauldron, the three-legged stool, the bucket—standing close at hand as if in actual use. On either side of the final picture, there is a glimpse of a little ante-room in which jewel-caskets and a string of beads seen in a half-open cupboard, suggest the approach to that “quiet chamber far apart,”—“The Rose Bower” itself:—

“Here lies the hoarded love, the key
To all the treasure that shall be.
Come, fated hand, the gift to take,
And smite the sleeping world awake.”

The princess, in simple white, a white coverlet

¹ It was this background which called forth from Mr. Sedding, the architect, the remark “What a splendid architect Burne-Jones would have made!”

drawn over her to the waist, rose-flushed like a sleeping child, lies on her couch in all the beauty of her youth and innocence. The simple lines of her girlish figure, and its perfect repose and serenity, recall Carpaccio's "St. Ursula." Around her sleep her maidens; one, near the head of the couch, holds a musical instrument; two others are at her feet; all are beautiful, but none quite so young nor quite so childlike in beauty as their mistress. The charm of her simplicity is enhanced by the richness of her surroundings; every inch of the canvas is full of exquisitely wrought design; yet, as in the "King Cophetua," the whole effect is in no way marred by this lavish wealth of detail. At the first glance the impression given is one of "perfect form in perfect rest," and the lines, almost all horizontal, are arranged with the idea of emphasising the sense of repose which exists to an even greater degree in this picture than in the preceding ones. In the first subject, one feels that sleep has fallen on a struggle, in the second, on a grave debate, in the third, on pleasant work and merry laughter, in all three, unexpectedly; but this is the chamber of sleep, and the princess has been laid upon her bed, and her maidens have gathered round her silently to watch and soothe her slumber with soft music, and then gently—before they have been able to put away the jewels, which with the comb and mirror, and jewelled crown, lie on the ground beside the couch—sleep has overcome them also, and the hand which played has fallen at the side of the musician, and only the growth of the rose has

marked the silent years ; invading the chamber through the casement, it has spread its blossom everywhere,—climbing the Byzantine columns, encircling the crown, and filling the casket. The colours, for all their richness, are such as to rest the eye by their harmony ; the subdued ivory white and the pearly greys and rose-pinks of the centre of the composition gradually give way to the rich shades of the attendants' dresses, the peacock-patterned carpet, and the beautiful hangings in the background, above which, through the casement, is seen the glowing sky.

The exhibition of this new "Romance of the Rose" called forth the greatest enthusiasm. The power of sustained effort evidenced by it, the originality, the imaginative charm, the beauty of texture and colour, the richness of detail, as well as the exquisite symbolism which invests every part of it, all these qualities which year after year, in the works exhibited by Burne-Jones, had by degrees been impressing themselves on the public mind, now met from all sides with the full recognition which was their due, and which one is glad to think was given to the painter in his lifetime.

CHAPTER VIII

LATER WORKS

1890-1898

"The Star of Bethlehem"—The Exeter College tapestry—"Sponsa de Libano"—New Gallery Exhibition 1892-3—Mosaics for American church in Rome—"Vespertina Quies"—The Stanmore tapestries—"The Dream of Launcelot"—"Aurora"—The Kelmscott *Chaucer*—Death of Morris—"Arthur in Avalon"—"Love's Wayfaring"—Decorative works, portraits, and cartoons, from 1878.

THE year following the completion of "The Briar Rose," Burne-Jones exhibited two large water-colours: "The Star of Bethlehem" and "Sponsa de Libano."

"The Star of Bethlehem," designed in the first place for a tapestry, was carried out as a picture—probably the largest water-colour ever painted—for the Corporation of Birmingham. It is a composition built up almost entirely of vertical lines, so skilfully handled that no suspicion of monotony, but only the highest degree of impressiveness, is obtained. The Virgin is represented with the Child upon her knees, seated on a heap of straw beneath a roughly thatched shelter surrounded by a wattled fence; beside her stands Joseph, a bundle of wood under his arm, lost in thought at the marvels which he sees: for—though

winter reigns in the bleak stretch of land which slopes upward to the barren wood—all about the humble shrine where the meek Madonna holds her state, the wilderness has rejoiced and blossomed as the rose, and, through the long grass and rushes, a spring of water has bubbled up to make a fertile oasis about the Holy Child; while before the little naked Babe, who, from the safe shelter of His mother's arms, turns His wondering eyes upon them, stand the star-guided kings of tradition, "the first of myscreauntes that byleved on Christ." No literal representation of the story has been attempted; as usual it is its symbolic aspect which has appealed to Burne-Jones, and he has pictured here, not only the homage of the different races of mankind, but the bending down of the Heart, Mind and Soul of humanity before the mystery of the Incarnation: the swarthy African, in his gorgeously embroidered robes, is the type of man's physical nature; the majestic Oriental, in his turban and mantle, bent with the wisdom of the ages, fittingly represents the mind, the intellectual faculties of man; the mailed warrior of northern or western race, with his spiritual face and beautiful hands, symbolises the soul, armed for conflict with the world; each brings his crown and casket of gifts to the feet of the Infant Christ, and the guiding star is represented by a light borne in the hands of an angel who, motionless, with great wings and stately draperies falling to his downstretched feet, sheds the radiance of the divine light upon the scene.

It was by this subject that Burne-Jones to be remembered both in his native town the chapel of his Oxford College, where Adoration of the Magi," wrought in tapestry. William Morris, perpetuates the memory of noble friendship. Here, as in all the tapestries, the firm, the border, flowers, foliage, and of ornament were designed by Morris and his able staff trained by him. The colouring varies considerably from the picture; the tapestry glows with peacock blues and rich crimsons, in the picture, which is much more cold in green predominates; the embroidered border the old king's robe, representing knights and dragons, the procession of angels which in the African's draperies, are replaced in the tapestry by simpler designs. The angel is in shining blue and gold, instead of the blue and green angel of the picture, and he is nearer to the figures. White lilies—the effect of which the warm scheme of colour, is very beautiful—are introduced behind the figures. The tapestry is smaller and less lovely than the dark-haired eyed Babe of the picture, and the expression of the Virgin's face is less intense, but it was difficult to imagine a finer piece of decoration or one more suited to the place it is meant to adorn.

"Sponsa de Libano" was developed from a series of five drawings from "The Song of Songs," done in 1876 and originally made in needlework. It illustrates the words: "O north wind; and come, thou south; blow

my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." Here a distant inspiration can be traced to Botticelli's "Birth of Venus," both in the attitude of the woman's figure and in the representation of the Winds, but there the resemblance ceases, for the narrow, upright composition, its upper part almost entirely filled by the magnificent mass of swirling draperies which surround the ethereal floating figures, the pensive grace of the Bride of Lebanon as her lovely feet follow the windings of the shallow rivulet which waters her tall lilies, these things—as well as every feature of the landscape and the whole atmosphere of the picture—are peculiarly characteristic of Burne-Jones.

In 1891 a serious illness interrupted the master's work, and consequently nothing new was shown in 1892, but the winter was marked by a memorable exhibition at the New Gallery of a collection of finished works, studies, sketches, and designs, showing the evolution of his art from the beginning of his career to his splendid maturity.

Among the works first finished after his return to health were some designs begun in 1882 for the decoration in mosaic of the American church in Rome. This was a commission which particularly pleased Burne-Jones, for as he said: "It is to be in Rome, and it is to last for eternity." Full as he was of the study of Byzantine art, no one understood better the possibilities and restrictions of mosaic; and the designs he produced, carried out by the Murano Glass Company, are the most beautiful examples of modern decorative art in Rome. He filled the upper part of the half

dome of the apse with a circling glory of angels singing to their golden harps ; clouds float beneath their feet, and against a deep blue sky rise the golden ramparts of Heaven. The central place, above the altar, is occupied by the throne of the Son of God, who, draped in white, with the rainbow beneath His feet, holds the orb in His left hand, and lifts the right in benediction. The figure preserves the stateliness, the ordered stiffness and formality of Byzantine art, and yet attains that ideal of beauty, which, though within the mind, was beyond the reach of the artists of those early times. The Christ is surrounded by angels of different orders of the heavenly hierarchy, and beneath the rainbow spring the four rivers of Paradise, which, flowing to right and left, wash the foundations of the wall. On each side of the throne are seen three of the gates of Heaven, guarded, all but one, by archangels. The first place on the right hand of Christ, that of Lucifer, stands empty—a fine dramatic conception. The other gates are guarded by Michael and Uriel, and those on the left by Gabriel, Chemuel, and Zophiel, each bearing their special attributes.

Other designs for the same church were "The Annunciation" and "The Nativity," carried out over two arches ; "The End of the World" ; "The Fall of Lucifer," later painted as a picture ; and "The Tree of Life,"—the most beautiful of all, and the most stamped with Burne-Jones's individuality—executed in the space above the chancel arch. The cartoon for this is, with the plaster model for the apse, in the Victoria and Albert

Museum, and, in the sketch-book left by the artist to the British Museum, the development of the design can be traced from its first idea. In the centre rises the Tree of Life—Igdrasil, whose boughs reach into heaven, and whose roots into hell—and, on the tree, His head bent lovingly forward, His arms outstretched horizontally in the manner in which early Christian art loved to represent the idea of universal redemption, His feet against the trunk—not nailed to the tree, but bestowing Himself willingly—is the Son of Man. On either side, the human race is typified by Adam and Eve standing in attitudes of adoration beneath the outstretched hands. Beside the figure of the man is a cornfield ripe for harvest; tall Madonna lilies spring up beside Eve and her children. The sweeping curves of the landscape, the severe silhouette of earth and tree against the pale sky, the simple grandeur of the composition and its splendid adaptation to the space it has to fill are admirable.

In 1894 the replica in oils of the damaged "Love among the Ruins" was exhibited, and with it a harmony in blue and gold, a vision of peace and restfulness, entitled, "Vespertina Quies." It represents a beautiful young girl with brown hair falling over her shoulders, leaning on a balcony in the soft evening light and dreamily toying with a ring on her little finger. Behind her is seen the quiet convent with its grass-grown court, and beyond that the wooded hillside slopes upward to the luminous sky.

A series of designs for tapestry from the *Morte*

d'Arthur belongs also to this time. It began with "The Apparition of the Damsel of the San Grael to the Knights of the Round Table," then showed "The Departure of the Knights," "The Failure of Sir Gawaine and Sir Ywaine," "The Dream of Launcelot," "Sir Bors, Sir Percival and Sir Galahad at the chapel of the San Grael," and ended by a fine decorative par "The Ship of the Knights"; a "Verdura," representing deer grazing in a wood, the branches of which are hung with shields, was also designed to run beneath the figure subjects. These tapestries, executed for Stanmore Hall and repeated for Mr. George McCulloch, were the chief beauty of the British Pavilion at the Paris Exhibition of 1900.

Pictures were also painted of some of these subjects, and, in 1896, an oil-painting of the fourth of the series was exhibited; it varies from the tapestry in the attitude and expression of the angel, who, while uttering the words of reprobation, "Sir Launcelot, more hard than is the stone, and more bitter than is the wood, and more naked and barer than is the leaf of the fig-tree, therefore go thou from hence, and withdraw thee from this holy place," gazes with infinite regret and pity on the exhausted recumbent figure.

In "Aurora," also shown in 1896, the spirit of the dawn is represented by a maiden, who, with the grace of motion and the light-footedness of a figure by Botticelli, comes dancing along the narrow causeway beside the still canal, clashing her cymbals to awaken the sleeping houses. The background and surroundings were developed from

a sketch done in 1867, from a bridge over a canal near the railway station at Oxford, a spot recognisable even now, and which at once recalls the picture to anyone who knows and loves it.

The same year saw the completion of the magnificent Kelmscott *Chaucer* for which Burne-Jones had drawn eighty-seven illustrations, while the title, initials and borders had been designed by Morris. For years it had been the friends' habit to spend their Sunday mornings together, designing for *The Earthly Paradise*, or for editions of their favourite authors which Morris was always planning and insisting that Burne-Jones should illustrate. Mr. Mackail relates that on one of the many occasions when Morris was pressing Burne-Jones for more drawings for his press, the latter turned to him with the words, "You would think, to listen to Top, that I was the only artist in the world,"—and that Morris's comment was—"Well, perhaps you wouldn't be so far wrong." The *Chaucer* had been to both a labour of infinite love—a sort of *Chartres de poche* they intended it to be, in the perfection and richness of all its details,—and they accomplished their aim, leaving it a splendid monument of their joint efforts, and starting, with its production, a new era in the history of artistic publication. The illustrations, with their perfect composition, their simple charm and bewitching imaginative power, must be studied in the book to be appreciated at their full value.

Many other designs for the Kelmscott Press were made or begun by Burne-Jones; among them a series of about two hundred drawings for Mr.

Mackail's *Biblia Innocentium*, twenty-five of which were so far carried out that it has lately been found possible to publish them.¹ Of other works intended, a great *Froissart*, and a *Morte d'Arthur*, which was to have been even more magnificent than the *Chaucer*, were the principal—but these were never to be produced: Morris's health, which had long been failing, at last gave out, and on the 3rd of October 1896, less than six months after the completion of the *Chaucer*, Burne-Jones lost the friend who had been to him more than a brother. "I should be like a man who had lost his back," he had once said, speaking of what Morris's death would be to him; and he was not long to survive him;—only for a little more than a year and a half was work to be continued on the many canvases which he used playfully to tell his friends would require "at least a hundred years" to finish. With the consistency which marked all his life, the subjects now occupying him were still drawn from the same sources in which thirty years before he had found his artistic inspiration. Still the same glamour hung about the verse of Chaucer and the legend of King Arthur as when he and Morris pored over them in their Oxford days, and the last picture to leave his studio for the New Gallery Exhibition was a painting of "The Prioress's Tale," the same subject which he had painted in 1857 on the cabinet for Morris in the rooms at Red Lion Square.

The last picture to be worked upon was the

¹ *The Beginning of the World*. Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1902.

great "Arthur in Avalon." This had been begun in 1881, and a sketch of the first idea for the composition, as well as many studies for the figures, are, with the picture itself, in the possession of Mr. Sydney Goldmann. Here the fairy dwelling of Avalon is represented by a two-winged Byzantine colonnade. In the enclosed space, under a canopy of beaten gold on which is represented the Quest of the Graal, lies the mail-clad sleeping warrior. Two of the queens who have brought him thither sit in attitudes of lamentation at his head and at his feet, while the third, standing behind the couch, holds in readiness for him the crown of the sovereignty of the future, that of the past being represented by the diadem deposited on the ground :—

"Hic jacet Arthurus, rex quondam, rexque futurus."

One attendant stands watching; four others sitting on the ground play softly on stringed instruments. On either side stand groups of watchers, three of whom hold the helmet, shield, and spear, while others wait anxiously for the time when they may raise their great trumps to their lips, and herald the awakening of the deliverer. In the foreground, the iris, columbine, and forget-me-not grow in wild luxuriance on the enchanted shore, and beyond, above the colonnade and the trees which close the view on either side, are seen the sweeping curves of a desolate expanse of country. In the original conception, side panels were to have represented Arthur's last great battle, but this idea was abandoned for

another, in which the hill-fairies and spirits of nature were to have been shown sharing the anxious expectations of humanity. Studies for these exist, but were never carried out. Fortunately the picture itself, the largest the artist ever painted, was nearly completed when he laid down his brush for the last time.

Another great picture, which, with "The Wheel of Fortune," recalls perhaps more than any other of his works the characteristics of Michel Angelo, was to be called "Love's Wayfaring."¹ It had been drawn full size on the canvas, and in its unfinished state can be seen at the Garden Studio. High on his massive car, Love, as though impatient of the slowness of his advance, has stepped from his throne, and seems to be urging his victims onward. Down the arched and narrow street they come—a crowd of men and women with wistful, haunting faces—and all who meet his ponderous wheels must perforce turn back and join in Love's wayfaring, for there is no room on either side for any to pass by and thus escape his yoke. A note in Burne-Jones's diary, as far back as 1872, mentions "Love's Wayfaring" as one of four subjects "which above all others I desire to paint, and count my chief designs for some time to come," and one cannot but regret that press of other work did not allow the completion of this picture which, by no less an authority than Mr. Watts, whose admiration for the work of his friend is well known, is pronounced to have been the grandest of all his conceptions.

¹ Or "The Car of Love."

The last entry in the same diary tells of the beginning of a design for tapestry,—“The Passing of Venus,”—“that the traditions of tapestry weaving at Merton Abbey might not be forgotten or cease.” For this a water-colour sketch of great beauty, the first idea of which is to be found in the background of “*Laus Veneris*,” was done; it represents Venus drifting by in a winged chariot drawn by doves, while from a bevy of girls in the foreground Love selects his victims. Some fly startled at his approach, one falls beneath his feet, but the tallest and fairest stands erect, and bravely meeting his gaze, bares her bosom to receive the shaft.

Among the decorative works produced since 1878 were designs for a “Nativity” and “Entombment,” made for a tomb at Castle Howard, and one representing “Flodden Field,” for Naworth Castle, all three of which were carried out in bronze by Sir Edgar Boehm. A coloured memorial tablet to Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton, in which, as in the church of St. Apollinare in Classe, the peacock is used as the symbol of immortality, was executed in gesso in 1886; in the same material, “Cupid’s Hunting Fields,” already several times repeated in oils in different schemes of colour, was made the subject of a beautiful panel; a cassone was adorned with a design of “The Hesperides,” and a casket with one of “Pandora.” A clavichord by Mr. Dolmetsch was painted for Mrs. Mackail with a representation of “St. Margaret,” and a charming little fantasy, worked on at intervals during this period, was

"The Flower Book," composed of a series of small circular paintings inspired by the names of flowers; thus "Golden Thread" suggested the story of Theseus and the Clue, and "Love in a Tangle" that of Fair Rosamond; "Golden Cup" is the Angel of the San Graël passing by the sleeping Launcelot; the name of "Meadowsweet" is represented by Arthur's passage to the fairy meadow of Avalon; "White Garden" is the Annunciation among the lilies; "Flower of God," the Annunciation in a cornfield; "Traveller's Joy," the Manger of Bethlehem appearing to the weary kings, and "Arbor Tristis," the foot of the cross at nightfall, with Jerusalem in the background.

Work of an altogether different kind was the designing of all the armour, costumes, and accessories for Mr. Comyns Carr's play of *King Arthur*, produced at the Lyceum in 1895.

Although constantly importuned to paint portraits, it was scarcely to be expected from an artist of Burne-Jones's imaginative temperament that he would devote much attention to this branch of art. His opinion of his capacities in this respect was humorously given in a letter to a friend: "Did you see," he wrote, "that a certain photographer set up in Paris once, and advertised 1 work thus:—

Ressemblance frappante	. 5 fcs
Ressemblance ordinaire .	. 2 fcs 50
Air de famille . . . .	. 0 fcs 50

I should never get more than 50 c. for my likenesses!"

In spite of this modest estimate of his ability, he was singularly happy in the comparatively few portraits he executed. His pencil study of "Paderewski" is well known; so are the painting of "Miss Gaskell," and the two contrasting child portraits of "Philip Comyns Carr," and "Dorothy Drew,"—the one intensely serious, with earnest eyes and ethereal face, the other a delicious, pixie-like, barefooted child, with mischief-loving eyes, and a mass of curly hair. This is said to have been, of all the painter's works, the one he found the most difficult to accomplish, probably because of the impossibility of keeping such a lively little maiden, for even a few minutes at a time, in anything like the position required; it needed, he said, all the respect and admiration he felt for the child's grandfather to prevent him from giving up the attempt in despair. Many years before, he had done in subdued light and shade a pencil drawing of Miss Gladstone which had called forth Ruskin's praise. Other portraits were of the Misses Graham, and of Mr. Graham, of Mr. Benson, of Miss Gertrude and Miss Katherine Lewis, and a very fine one, in profile, holding her violin, of the daughter of Professor Norton, of Harvard. In his own family, he painted a portrait of his wife, in black, her two children—the boy painting, the girl looking on—seen in the background; and several of his daughter, now Mrs. Mackail, whose face, as well as her mother's, appears so often in his pictures. The one in which she sits in a blue dress, one sweet-pea blossom at her throat for all ornament, the beautiful line

of her *profil perdu* reflected in a circular mirror behind her, is the best known; there is also a symphony in white, in which she is seen in profile holding a book, and a half-length standing portrait, and in all three the same exquisite hands appear. One of the last canvases Burne-Jones worked upon was a delightful portrait which remained unfinished, of his little blue-eyed grandson, in a blue jersey against a dark blue background. A great number of chalk and pencil portraits were done, and among the studies for pictures are many drawings done from friends whose faces lent themselves to the subjects which were in the artist's mind, and which, while being studies for those subjects, are at the same time excellent portraits; such is the fine red chalk study of "Melchior," drawn from Mr. Mackail, for "The Star of Bethlehem."

Only a few of the cartoons for glass can here be mentioned; one, very characteristic and interesting, was designed for the Church of the Holy Trinity, Boston, U.S.A.; it represents "David instructing Solomon in the Building of the Temple." The old mail-clad king, his mighty sword at his side, sits on a throne of Byzantine design, showing his son, whose peaceful character is betokened by his student's garb, a plan of the Temple he is to build. At the foot of the throne are the coffered of gold dedicated to the sacred work, and beside them sit the scribes taking notes and making researches in old books. On one side stand the warriors, in mediæval accoutrements, on whose banners are pictured the

valiant deeds of the king's youth ; on the other, women are bringing their jewels to add to the building fund.

Another commission for windows was for a house at Newport, Rhode Island. Here, since their purport was to adorn a private dwelling, free scope was given to the artist's imagination in the choice of subject. His knowledge of archæology and love of old traditions at once inspired him with the thought of commemorating the Norse heroes, who, four hundred years before the "discovery" of America, sailed the unknown seas and left a record of their visit to the country they called "Vineland," in the old round tower which still stands at Newport. "Thorfinn Karlsefne," "Leif the Lucky," and "Gudrida, wife of Thorstein," were the three selected to occupy the lower lights, while in the upper ones, seated above the clouds, are shown the Northern gods, "Thor," "Odin," and "Frey."

Admirable as Burne-Jones's windows are, none are finer than those in St. Philip's Church, Birmingham. Here, while remaining strictly within the limitations of stained glass, he obtained a quite extraordinary degree of effectiveness, and produced works which are probably the highest attainment of modern times in this branch of art.

The first to be executed, for the two sides of the great east window, were the well-known "Nativity" and "Crucifixion," the cartoons for which, shown in 1888 at the first exhibition of the Arts and Crafts Society which Burne-Jones did so much to promote, are now in the Victoria and

Albert Museum. In "The Nativity," in the upper part of the window, against a background of trees whose trunks are illumined by the light from the celestial vision, the angels are appearing to the dazzled shepherds. Below, under the rocky ledges which divide the composition into two parts, is seen the cave of Bethlehem, where a host of seraphs join with Joseph and Mary in adoration of the new-born Babe. The balance of line and mass, the richness of imagination which has filled every space with contrasting and yet harmonious elements, and the skill with which the tiny figure lying on the ground is made the centre of interest, can well be judged from the cartoon—nor is "The Crucifixion" less wonderful. Above the dense mass of humanity which surrounds the foot of the Cross, is seen in supreme and solemn grandeur, the figure of Christ. The vertical lines of the spears and banners which surround Him seem to increase the idea of elevation, as He hangs there in unapproachable loneliness, against a lurid sky whose darkness is made more intense by the weird circles of light which break through it. Below, in the foreground, are the holy women and St. John; beyond, the Roman soldiers, one of whom, distinguished by a halo, raises his spear; beyond these are the cruel faces of the priests and Pharisees, and in the distance, the battlemented city walls loom dark against the horizon. Later, between these two subjects, "The Ascension" was represented; the composition is very simple, the colour deep and rich; the disciples and the holy women stand gazing upwards; above, separated



THE NATIVITY
(Cartoon for stained glass)

UNIV. OF
MICH.

was there that on the 21st of June, in the little church radiant with the glory of the windows designed by him,¹ his funeral service took place, and there his ashes rest, in the quiet churchyard, among the flowers he so loved, within sound of the sea.

"Gone from King Arthur and his table round,
To join the knightliest souls who reign in heaven."²

¹ The east window of St. Margaret's Church, Rottingdean, representing the three Archangels "Gabriel, Michael and Raphael," was Sir Edward and Lady Burne-Jones's offering on the occasion of their daughter's marriage. Other Burne-Jones and Morris windows in the same church represent "The Tree of David," "Jacob's Ladder," "St. Margaret," "St. Mary," and "St. Martin."

² *The Artist*, xxii., "In Memoriam. Sir Edward Burne-Jones." By Canon Rawnsley.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

Summary—Honours conferred upon Burne-Jones—Exhibitions of his works—His method of work—Some features of his work—His character.

IT has been seen that Burne-Jones's career divides itself into two periods; the first, of very short duration, in which Rossetti was looked upon as "the one and only guide, and any divergence from his style appeared as a false step to be retraced as soon as possible"; and the second embracing the rest of his life, and showing the gradual development and mastery of his own method.

Comparison between the earliest and latest works shows the consistency of aim and effort which unites both periods. The technical change is of course immense, but there is no æsthetic one. His mind was already very highly trained when art was taken up as a profession, and, though its expression was hampered at first by the unpractised hand, there was never any hesitation as to the intended aim. From Rossetti, Burne-Jones gained confidence in himself and courage to follow his star; and from Ruskin, Madox Brown, G. F. Watts, and the Pre-Raphael-

ites with whom, through Rossetti, he came into contact, he learnt to seek the power he needed in the most conscientious study of nature.¹ In spite of technical deficiencies, the works of this time—done simply with “the wish to put figures down on paper and make them look as if they were doing what the story said they did”—show the born artist, not only by the imaginative power, spontaneity of design and sense of style revealed in the slightest of them, but above all by their beauty of colour,—colour “magnificently sombre, exuberantly rich, and sometimes so exquisitely profound as to be poetry itself; such in short as we find in the pictures of Giorgione and of his only.”²

Conscious of his shortcomings and determined to overcome them, and further stimulated by his visits to Italy, Burne-Jones soon added the study of the old masters to that of nature. He noted the perfection of line and form of the world's masterpieces. He “adored” Raphael; Carpaccio, Botticelli, Signorelli, Mantegna, Michel Angelo, in turn exercised their influence over him. He studied, experimented, tried new methods,—his fertile imagination the while constantly suggesting new subjects, new compositions: innumerable drawings were made for these and a vast number of

¹ Ruskin was for ever urging “dear old Ned” not to depend on his own invention, as he was often tempted to do by his creative powers of design, but to go to nature for everything.

² *The Portfolio*, vol. xvi, 1885, “Edward Burne-Jones, A.R.A.” By F. G. Stephens.

pictures begun, each of which when completed became the epitome of the work of years.¹ He familiarised himself with all forms of art, with the marbles of the Parthenon, the mosaics of Ravenna, Etruscan vases, Pompeian frescoes, Arab tiles, Oriental embroideries, mediæval illuminations, the works of the Quattrocentisti and the great masters of the Renaissance, as well as with the architecture of all times and nations. "Nothing which could add to the thoroughness and beauty of his work was a trouble to him, no researches which could help to his knowledge," and with his peculiar assimilative power, amalgamating in himself styles as opposite as the Classic, the Oriental and the Gothic, he created for himself a method in which the romantic feeling of his earlier works found magnificent expression. The poetic and artistic faculties, as inextricably united in him as the religious and artistic in Fra Angelico, attained an equal degree of development. The love of beauty for beauty's sake was such as to prevent perfection of line ever being sacrificed to expression, while on the other hand the claims of the purely ornamental were never allowed to exclude those of poetic thought. It is this unique union of the highest gifts of the

¹ To take only a few examples: "The Wine of Circe" commenced in 1863 was finished in 1869; "The Prioress's Tale" was worked upon at intervals from 1865 to 1898; "The Mirror of Venus" occupied Burne-Jones's thoughts from 1867 to 1877. The conception of "The Wheel of Fortune" belongs to 1871, its completion to 1883; "The Briar Rose" series, and "Arthur in Avalon" were worked upon for twenty years.

decorative artist with those of the imaginative poet which constitutes the peculiar excellence of Burne-Jones's art.

That the genius of this great artist, even while engaged in producing pictures sufficient to have occupied a lifetime and to have assured their creator's fame, was, from the beginning of his career, placed also at the service of the decorative arts, was due to the influence of W. Morris ; and the united efforts of these two men to help "to make this earth a beautiful and happy place" were successful in so far that they impressed their noble ideal upon their generation, raised the national standard of taste, brought new life and light into modern manufactures, and originated a movement which has reunited art and craftsmanship, and, by awakening the popular desire for beauty in daily life, has changed the aspect of modern living and the current of thought regarding it. As to Burne-Jones's individual achievement and the influence he has exercised not only in England and America but on the Continent, we are still too near to him to be able adequately to judge of its immense importance.

It has been seen how, undeterred by the opposition which greeted his earlier works, Burne-Jones won his way by degrees into the foremost ranks of fame. Perhaps none of his honours were so valued as those which came to him in 1881 from his own University, when the degree of D.C.L. and the title of Honorary Fellow of his old college were conferred upon him. In 1882 he was invited by the Committee of the Inter-

national Exhibition of Contemporary Art to represent British Art in Paris in company with Sir Frederic Leighton. The Ellis and Graham sales of 1884 and 1886 showed the value his work had acquired in the eyes of connoisseurs, and in 1885, the year of his election to Associateship of the Royal Academy, he was also elected President of the Birmingham Society of Artists, and re-elected the year following. In 1888 he was re-elected a member of the Water-colour Society, and in 1889 his "King Cophetua" was awarded a first-class medal at the Paris Exhibition, an honour which was followed by the bestowal of the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour. The exhibition of "The Briar Rose" at Agnew's in 1890 and at Toynbee Hall, Whitechapel, the following year, proved how the tide of popularity had turned towards him, and in 1892 fresh foreign honours came to him, when he was invited to exhibit a collection of his drawings at the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, of which he was made an Associate. He was also made a Corresponding Member of the Institute of France, and some of his drawings have found a place in the Luxembourg, for which he was invited to paint a picture. Again, the Leyland sale of 1892 proved the appreciation of his countrymen for his work, and the exhibition of his collected works held at the New Gallery in the winter of 1892-3 showed beyond a doubt the place he had attained in contemporary art. In 1893 he was made an Honorary Member of the Munich Academy of Arts. In 1894 a baronetcy was bestowed upon him, and the same year he

received a first-class medal at the Antwerp Exhibition. In 1895 he was elected a Member of the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts. In 1896 a collection of his drawings and studies exhibited at the Fine Art Society further increased the fame of his fine draughtsmanship, and in 1897 the Gold Medal of the Munich Exhibition was awarded to him for his series of "St. George and the Dragon." Only a few months before his death, in May 1898, at the Ruston sale, "The Mirror of Venus," which at Mr. Leyland's sale had fetched 3,570 guineas, was sold for the still higher price of 5,450 guineas, "Le Chant d'Amour" realising 3,200 guineas. Thus in the last weeks of his life Burne-Jones had the satisfaction of knowing that time was only increasing the value set upon his art. This was still more conclusively proved when, after his death, at the sale which took place in accordance with his will at Christie's, the sum of £30,000 was realised by the "remaining works."

The winter following, two memorable exhibitions were held at the New Gallery and at the Burlington Fine Arts Club of the master's pictures, drawings, and studies.

Encouraging as were the honours life laid at his feet, Burne-Jones was too great a man to be spoilt by popularity and success. No unworthy consideration ever for an instant caused him to swerve from the principle he had laid down for himself in his college days: "Our work, whatever it be, must be the best of its kind, the noblest we can offer."—"What does it matter, my dear

Scotus," he once said to W. Bell Scott, *à propos* of the Médaille d'Honneur which Gustave Moreau and many others were of opinion should have been awarded to his "King Cophetua" at the Paris Exhibition,—“what does it matter whether they give me a medal or not, if one can't do what one tries or wishes to do? and I can only come near what I wish, and am unhappy in consequence,”—and that was ever his spirit; to the end he felt “the Himalayas in front of him”; equally undisturbed by praise or blame he worked on, his life, like those of the heroes he loved to paint and in whose familiar company he lived, a spiritual pilgrimage; his quest, like theirs, the vision of the ideal.

How hard he worked in striving after this ideal may be gathered from the following account of his daily life given by his son: “He was down punctually by eight o'clock every morning and, after breakfasting and seeing to such letters as required his personal attention, went upstairs to the studio, and was ready to start work by nine o'clock, and in his studio he remained, with the exception of half an hour for lunch, for the rest of the day, and this was his day's work always. For a great number of years he used to work after dinner in the evenings as well, at cartoons for stained glass windows, and he only gave this up when considerations affecting his eyesight compelled him to do so. . . . He could not endure the notion of spending a day without work, and he never spent such a day. He rarely left London. When he did it was only to go to

his house at Rottingdean, where another studio awaited him, which he eagerly sought and reluctantly left."¹

The evolution of the pictures, the amount of "underground work" which went to the making of them, can be followed in the sketches and drawings. Mr. Hollyer's beautiful reproductions of a great number of these are as valuable for purposes of study as the originals themselves. In them is found the secret of Burne-Jones's completeness, and one can observe both the selective instinct which guided him and the manner in which he—so to speak—took the terms of nature and translated them into his own language. There too can be seen his extraordinary "capacity for taking trouble." The first stage of a picture was, of course, the sketch, the rough indication of its plan, and, this being settled, studies for the figures and careful drawings of the heads, hands, and feet were drawn from life, the same action being studied over and over again till the exact movement wanted had been definitely fixed upon. Then, small figures, on which to study draperies and light and shade, were modelled in wax or clay, and the various objects needed for the picture were constructed under his supervision. The usual "studio properties" did not content him, and he devised his own exquisite models, whether for armour, musical instruments, costumes, or furniture, thus making his pictures a mine of

¹ *Magazine of Art*, 1900. "Notes on some Unfinished Works of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart." By Sir Philip Burne-Jones, Bart.

suggestion for every form of applied art. The next stage was the execution on brown paper, in water-colour, or pastel, or both, of a highly-finished full-size cartoon. The outlines were then traced and transferred to the canvas by the skilled assistants Burne-Jones had trained to help him in these matters, and filled in in monochrome, the surface of the lightest parts only being prepared with pure flake white which was allowed to become absolutely dry before the work was proceeded with. Then the real painting began, and each part as it was taken up, was carried to a high degree of finish,—the cartoon and studies being used to work from, and constant reference being also made to the living model. The method can be well observed in the "Venus Concordia" and other unfinished works at the Garden Studio. The medium, used very sparingly, was composed of copal, linseed oil, and spike oil, and no colour the permanence of which was at all doubtful, was ever employed; in fact, nothing which could ensure the permanence of the work was neglected, and such was the painter's conscientiousness of workmanship that if, in spite of all his care, he found himself obliged to make extensive alterations in a picture already far advanced, he preferred the labour of starting afresh on a new canvas to running the risk of the correction one day becoming visible and impairing the beauty of his work. One has but to look at any one of his pictures to realise the care which was spent on every portion of their surface: "I love to treat my pictures," he once said, "as a goldsmith

does his jewels. I should like every inch of surface to be so fine that if all were buried or lost, all but a scrap from one of them, the man who found it might say: 'Whatever this may have represented, it is a work of art, beautiful in surface and quality and colour.' And my greatest reward would be the knowledge that after ten years' possession, the owner of any picture of mine, who had looked at it every day, had found in it some new beauty he had not seen before."

Burne-Jones's pictures are indeed almost as difficult to exhaust as Nature herself; wherever the eye travels it rests on exquisite form; every blade of grass seems to have been the object of loving work, and the familiar wild flowers that spring up wherever they may find a place, the little birds that sing on the branches, or flutter round the gentle beings who move through this enchanted world, the tiny pebbles which shine like jewels on the garden path of "Venus Concordia" or on the ocean floor of "The Depths of the Sea," the delicate shells which glisten on the sand of the remote shore where the Nereids are arming Perseus, the thorny growth of the briar through all the length of its coils, are painted with the same tenderness which is bestowed on the figures themselves, on the arrangement of their hair, or the fall of their draperies. No surface is left uninteresting,—whether it absorb the light or reflect it, whether it be plain or covered with rich ornament, whether its beauty be its glowing colour or the reflection in its polished surface of a flower or a woman's foot, there is

always about it that subtle quality which pervades all Burne-Jones's work,—yet, with all this detail, never is the breadth of effect lost sight of.

By his singleness of purpose, his conscientious method of work, and the earnestness with which he sought to express his own thought in all that he did, Burne-Jones carried on the Pre-Raphaelite tradition; in his application of the principles of the Brotherhood to a totally different range of subjects—personification of ideas, rather than presentation of facts—he differs from the original school. His art is more closely akin to Rossetti's than to that of any other painter of the set, but while his powers of draughtsmanship and sense of decorative design exceed those of Rossetti, his mystic, almost ascetic, nature caused him to substitute a more immaterial quality for the fire and passion and vigorous luxuriousness of Rossetti's art.

That defects can be noted in Burne-Jones's works must of course be admitted: sometimes the standard of proportion chosen is an arbitrarily elongated one; sometimes a certain hardness about the painting of flesh gives the hands and faces the appearance of inlaid ivory; sometimes, in later days, the intense feeling of the early water-colours and their *naïf* charm is replaced by a less convincing sentiment, and by a sort of formality and mannerism; sometimes, in fact, it is apparent that Burne-Jones has “with his high and noble faculties the defects of those qualities”—but it is idle to find fault with his technique because it is not that of Franz Hals, Rubens, Velasquez or

Rembrandt. His aim was a widely different one from that of the great realists, and he was never a great master of the brush in the sense in which that term applies to them. What he sought was not the reproduction of the glorious sensuous beauty of material life, but the evocation of a mood, the transporting of the spectator far from reality into a realm of thought which is to the visible world what the astral body is to the physical; it is "a mirage, a kind of transposition of life rather than life itself."¹ "I mean by a picture," he would say, "a beautiful romantic dream of something that never was, never will be—in a land no one can define or remember, only desire—and the forms divinely beautiful." And from this point of view Rossetti's verdict may be unreservedly accepted:—"If, as I hold, the noblest picture is a painted poem, then I say that in the whole history of art there has never been a painter more greatly gifted than Burne-Jones with the highest qualities of poetic invention." This is a standpoint which cannot be adopted by all, but even those who reject it must admit Burne-Jones's incontestably fine draughtsmanship and power of design: "For composition," says M. de la Sizeranne, "if that be restricted to the adjustment of lines and to the order and motion of the outlines, there is perhaps no European master of the present day who could equal him." There is room in the kingdom of art for the painters of all schools, for those to whom expression is all in all as well as for those whose appeal is to the sense

¹ Paul Leprieux, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1893.

of vision alone, and Verlaine's admirable definition—" *L'art, mes enfants, c'est d'être absolument soi-même*"—applies equally to all. Certainly no art has ever more faithfully mirrored the temperament from which it sprang than that of Burne-Jones, and none but a superficial observer could look upon it as a lifeless imitation of the painters of an earlier age. He had the same temper of soul which belonged to the Primitives: "every thought, every symbol, as it passed the threshold of his imagination, struck itself into form; he saw life and beauty in no other way . . . and the forms and colours of the real world were in their essence only so many symbols that he employed for the expression of an idea." It was his own impassioned and vitalising imagination, his worship of beauty in the smallest as well as the greatest works of nature, his aim of expressing always the eternal through the transient, which enabled him to recreate for himself and to carry to ultimate perfection a method which was thought to have had its day.

"If I could travel backwards," Burne-Jones once told a friend, "I think my heart's desire would take me to Florence, in the time of Botticelli":—and it is as though one from that beauty-loving age had come back, and, laden with dim memories of the joyous youth of the world, had gazed, through dreaming Celtic eyes, on modern life, its problems, ideals, and unsatisfied longings; the Latin sense of proportion and love of beautiful form is there, with the Celtic poetry and love of ornament, and, above all, with the Celtic "revolt

from fact." To this Celtic-Italian, beauty is not merely the joy of life,—it is also a spiritual mystery; and he invests it with that element of strangeness which Bacon recognised as essential to all "excellent beauty," that baffling sense of the unattainable and elusive which throws a veil of gentle melancholy over the fairest scenes. It has sometimes been brought against Burne-Jones as a reproach, that he abstracted himself too much from the realities of modern life. This abstraction is more apparent than real, for the spirit which imbues every one of his pictures shows that although he ignored in them the outer aspect of modern life, it was because his desire was—"to see above it, into the secret of the modern soul. All the turbulent audacities of modern thought, all its morbid questionings, all its ardent thirst for beauty, love, justice and truth, all its proud Promethean efforts for the enfranchisement of the race, all these find their echoes, sonorous or faint, through the speaking images of these ancient myths or Christian legends. Faith of humanity in itself, confidence in its high mission, in its ultimate destiny . . . a sort of ideal religion of order, duty, progress and brotherhood, a dream of a better, higher, crowning race of humankind, all this he exalts before us by the awakening of the noblest qualities of the human soul."¹

Burne-Jones's life and work were admirably consistent. His character was in keeping with

¹ *Revue de l'Art ancien et moderne*, 1899. "Deux idéalistes: Burne-Jones et Gustave Moreau." By Léonce Bénédict.

the noble ideals with which his mind was always occupied. To him all things were "but dim revelations of a hidden glory," and the sunshine of his golden optimism radiated on all with whom he came in contact. His sincerity and nobility of character, his charm of manner, his wit and humour, his warmth of heart and generosity, captivated all who had the happiness of knowing him,¹ and, himself the best of friends—sympathetic with that "understanding" which Ruskin said he could get from no man but him—he was blessed with lifelong friendships. He had the qualities of brain and heart which made Lowell pronounce him "a great man, independently of his work as a painter."—"In all that he did or said," says one of his friends, "there was the simplicity and directness of greatness, moral and intellectual greatness";—and another:—"I know nothing quite equal to the fineness of his chivalry as a man, any more than I know anything quite equal to his colour and design as a painter—in painting the love, and courage, and truth of knight-errantry, he painted his own character into his pictures."

¹ A very charming feature of Burne-Jones's character was his love and understanding of children. There is evidence of this in the "Letters to a Child," published in *The Strand* in 1891, and in the books filled with drawings made to amuse his own children or his many little friends. *Angela's Book*, *Phil's Book*, with their delightful contents—"Boy's School," "Girl's School," "Cat's School," "School for Dragon Babies," "Hisstry School," "Jogruffy School," "How to Draw a Baby in Six Lessons," etc.—all are delightful in their quaint humour and simple fun. One little friend was favoured with comic portraits of himself etched on two pennies ground down on one side.

It was a character of the type described by Pater as "Diaphaneité":—a character "like a relic from the classical age, laid open by accident to our alien modern atmosphere," and showing "the entire transparency of nature that lets through unconsciously all that is really life-giving in the established order of things." A radical of the radicals, a hot Home-Ruler, a revolutionist against the social anarchy which appeared to him and to William Morris as the result of the capitalist system, he had that "sympathetic perception of the dominant under-current of progress" which enabled him to keep to the end the enthusiasms of his youth. He longed for progress in every direction, and, like his Briar Rose knight, would fain have been the one to "smite the sleeping world awake" to a new order of things. "He delighted," says Mr. Spielmann, "in the rebellious spirit in which the Grosvenor Gallery started.—'I approve of rebellions, and if the Grosvenor Gallery gets fossilized, I hope another Grosvenor will arise and cut it out. I'm a born rebel, and my politics are those of a thousand years hence, the politics of the millennium, and therefore of no account.'"

"Lives of men who dream are not lives to tell, are they? You can tell a life of men who have fought and won and been beaten, because it is clear and definite, but what is there to say about a poet or an artist ever? To those who can see with eyes and read the ineffable it may be clear enough." These were the poet-artist's own words, and certainly all that it is essential to know

about him can best be learnt by the study of his works. Yet, for those to whom his name has become a spell wherewith to evoke the loveliest visions of glamour and romance, there must always be a fascination about every detail of a life which has set its stamp so deeply upon the culture and spirit of its time,—a life which cannot be better summarised than by the beautiful words so fittingly inscribed on a wreath of red roses sent as a last tribute of affection:—

“Love, that led thee alive and fed thy soul with sorrows
and joys and fears ;
Love, that sped thee alive and dead to fame’s fair goal
with thy deathless peers ;
Love, the flame of thy quenchless name with light that
lightens the rayless years.”¹

¹ *Astrophel.* A. C. Swinburne.

A LIST OF WORKS BY SIR EDWARD BURNE-JONES

I. PICTURES

w = water-colour. o = oil.

TITLE.	MEDIUM.	OWNER.	DATE.
"The Blessed Damozel" (16 x 18)	w	T. G. Arthur, Esq.	1857-60.
"The Annunciation" (21 x 15)	w	Richard Mills, Esq.	1857-61.
"Clara von Bork" (13½ x 7)	w	W. Graham Robertson, Esq. (from Leathart Collection)	1860-61.
"Sionia von Bork" (13 x 6½)	w		1860-61.
Triptych { Centre Panel: "The Adoration of the Magi" (43 x 61½) Outer Panels: "The Annunciation" (40½ x 20)	o	G. F. Bodley, Esq., R.A.	1861.
Triptych (altered replicas of above)	o	St. Paul's Church, Brighton	1861.
"The Forge of Cupid" (12½ x 19½)	w	R. H. Benson, Esq.	1861.
"Clerk Saunders" (27½ x 16½)	w	Mrs. W. J. Hadley	1861.
"Painting" (King René's Honeymoon)	w	Executors of the late Constance, Marchioness of Lothian	1861.
"Sculpture" (" ")	w	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1861.
"Merlin and Nimue" (25½ x 20)	w	{ Victoria and Albert Museum (from Leathart Collection)	1861.
"Viridis of Milan" (11½ x 9½)	w	Mrs. W. J. Hadley	1861.
"Girl and Goldfish" (11½ x 8½)	w	{ Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq. (from G. P. Boyce Collection)	1861-62.
"The Backgammon Players" (9½ x 14)	w	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1861-62.
"Laus Veneris" (small version, 12 x 18)	w	Sir John C. Holder, Bart.	1861-62.
"A Love Scene" (12 x 11)	w	Colonel H. Jekyll	1862.
"Theseus and Ariadne"	w	Executors of the late G. F. Watts, Esq., R.A.	1862.
"The Marriage of Sir Tristram" (23 x 22)	w	A. E. Street, Esq.	1862.
"King Mark preventing Iselt from killing herself"	w	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1862.

1 A replica of this picture is in the possession of Mr. E. Clifford.

TITLE.	MEDIUM.	OWNER.	DATE.
"The Madness of Sir Tristram" (23½ x 22)	w	Mrs. Coronio .	1862.
"Rosamond" (33 x 16)	w	Mrs. Severn .	1862.
"Fair Rosamond and Queen Eleanor" (10 x 10½)	w	{ Edward Clifford, Esq. (from Leathart Col- lection)	1862.
"Fatima" (31 x 10½)	w	The Earl of Carlisle .	1862.
"Hope" (8 x 6½)	w	Mrs. Knowles .	1862.
"Morgan le Fay"	w	Edward Clifford, Esq. .	1862.
"Annunciation" (The Flower of God) (24 x 21)	w	W. Coltart, Esq. .	1862-63.
Triptych {"Annunciation and Visitation," "Nativity," "Flight into Egypt,"}	w	Edward Clifford, Esq. .	1862-63.
"Summer Snow"	w	Stuart A. Donaldson, Esq. .	1863.
"Cinderella" (27 x 12½)	w	A. E. Street, Esq. .	1863.
"St. Valentine's Morning" (11 x 15)	w	" "	1863.
"The Merciful Knight" (39½ x 27)	w	{ John T. Middlemore, Esq. (from Leathart Collection)	1863.
"Theophilus and the Angel" (26 x 35)	w	{ A. E. Street, Esq. . Miss Gertrude Foster (from Leathart Col- lection)	1863-67.
"The Wine of Circe" (27½ x 40)	w	W. Coltart, Esq. .	1863-69.
"Green Summer" (11 x 19)	w	{ W. Coltart, Esq. . ? (From Graham Collection)	1864.
"A Lament" (4)	w	Edward Broadhurst, Esq. .	1864.
"The Choristers"	w	Martin Brimmer, Esq., Boston, U.S.A. .	1865.
"Astrologia" (21½ x 18½)	w	{ Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq. (from Lord Leighton's Collection)	1865.
"Le Chant d'Amour" (small version)	w	" "	1865.
"Chaucer's Dream" (first version, 11½ x 13½)	w	" "	1865.
"The Hours" (first version)	w	" "	1865.
"The Fates"	w	" "	1865.

1 A replica of this picture (12 x 10½) is in the possession of Mrs. Radcliffe.

2 A replica of this picture was painted in 1868.

3 A larger replica of this picture, painted in oils in 1868, was in the W. Graham Collection, and now belongs to Sir Cuthbert Quilter, Bart.

4 A replica of this subject, with variations, was begun many years later and left unfinished at the artist's death. It is in the possession of Mr. R. H. Benson.

5 Unfinished.

TITLE.	MEDIUM.	OWNER.	DATE.
"The Hesperides" (first version).	w	?	1869-72.
"Pan and Psyche" ($25\frac{1}{2} \times 21$).	w	Mrs. Hamilton of Skene	1869-74.
"Pan and Psyche" ($23\frac{1}{2} \times 20\frac{1}{2}$).	o	R. H. Benson, Esq.	1869-74.
"St. Barbara, St. Dorothea, and St. Agnes" (33×33).	o	Gray Hill, Esq. (from W. Graham Collection)	1869-79.
"Flora" (also called "Spring") (37×25).	o	A. Ionides, Esq.	1869-84.
"Phyllis and Demophoon" (36×13).	w	? (Formerly in Leyland Collection)	1870.
"Beatrice" ($26\frac{1}{2} \times 19\frac{1}{2}$).	w	Madame Cassavetti	1870.
"The King's Wedding" ($12\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$).	w	{ J. F. Horner, Esq. (from W. Graham Col- lection)	1870.
"Love disguised as Reason" ($26\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$).	w	{ Gertrude, Countess of Pembroke (from W. Graham Collection)	1870.
"Girl seated in a Meadow"	w	{ S. P. Cockerell, Esq. (from Lord Leighton's Collection)	?
"St. Cecilia" ($21\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$).	w	{ J. F. Horner, Esq. (from W. Graham Col- lection)	1870.
"Vesper" (first version, 31×22).	w	{ The Earl of Carlisle	1870-71.
"The Tower of Brass" (small version, $15 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$).	w	{ R. H. Benson, Esq.	1870-72.
"The Sirens"	o	{ Captain Holford	1870-72. ¹
"The Hesperides" (second version, $47 \times 38\frac{1}{2}$).	w	{ John T. Middlemore, Esq. (from Craven Col- lection)	1870-73.
"The Briar Rose" (First Series):	o	{ Mrs. Horner	1870-73.
1. The Coming of the Prince ($23\frac{1}{2} \times 50\frac{1}{2}$).			
2. The King & Sleeping Courtiers ($23\frac{1}{2} \times 52\frac{1}{2}$).			
3. The Sleeping Beauty ($23\frac{1}{2} \times 45$).			
"Love among the Ruins" (38×60).	w	R. E. Tatham, Esq.	1870-73.
"Elijah in the Wilderness"	o	Corporation of Birmingham	? ¹

¹ Unfinished. ² This picture was accidentally damaged in 1893, and a replica was then painted in oils. In the last days of his life, Burne-Jones found a method to restore the original picture, which he then again worked upon.

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"The Mill" (78 x 36)	Victoria and Albert Museum (C. Ionides Bequest)	1870-82.
"The Hours" (20½ x 71½)	Trustees of the late F. Austen, Esq.	1870-83.
"The Briar Rose (Second Series):	.	.	.	.	Sir Alexander Henderson, Bart.	1870-90.
1. The Briarwood (48 x 98).	.	.	.	.
2. The Council Room (48 x 98).	.	.	.	.
3. The Garden Court ¹ (48 x 91).	.	.	.	.
4. The Rose Bower ² (48 x 90).	.	.	.	.
"The Triumph of Love" (four panels):	.	.	.	.	Douglas W. Freshfield, Esq.	1871.
1. Fortune (12 x 64).	.	.	.	.
2. Fame (12 x 54).	.	.	.	.
3. Oblivion (12 x 54).	.	.	.	.
4. Love (12 x 64).	.	.	.	.
"Singing Children" (two circular pictures)	.	.	.	.	? Mrs. Stillman.	1871.
"Venus Epithalamia" (15 x 104).	.	.	.	.	Victoria and Albert Museum (C. Ionides Bequest)	1871.
"Dorigen of Bretagne" (104 x 144)	.	.	.	.	? (from Leyland Collection)	1871.
"Cupid and Psyche"	.	.	.	.	W. Connal, Esq.	1871.
"The Wheel of Fortune" (small version, 42 x 22)	.	.	.	.	H. W. Henderson, Esq. (from Craven Col.lection)	1871-86.
"Vesper" (second version, 31 x 22)	.	.	.	.	Lady Wantage (from Ellis Collection)	1872.
"Temperantia" (60 x 23)	.	.	.	.	Lilian, Duchess of Marlborough	1872.
"The Beguiling of Merlin" (72 x 43)	.	.	.	.	Walter Holland, Esq.	1872-74.
"Pyramus and Thisbe" (three panels)	.	.	.	.		1872-76.
1. Pyramus (14 x 104).	.	.	.	.
2. Love (14 x 54).	.	.	.	.
3. Thisbe (14 x 104).	.	.	.	.
"The Days of Creation" (six panels, each 40 x 134)	.	.	.	.	Sir Alexander Henderson, Bart.	1872-76.
"Spes" (69 x 274)	.	.	.	.	Sir Alexander Henderson, Bart.	1872-77.

¹ A pencil drawing, washed with colour, is in the possession of Mr. C. E. Hallé, and a replica in oils belongs to Mr. C. Sidney Goldmann.

² Water-colours of this subject are in the possession of Mrs. J. W. Mackail and Mr. Watson Armstrong.

³ Another small version of this subject in blue monochrome (w. 184 x 94) belonged to the late G. F. Watts, R.A.

⁴ A replica of this picture was made later.

TITLE.	MEDIUM.	OWNER.	DATE.
"The Golden Stairs" (103 x 46)	•	Lord Battersea	1872-80.
"The Feast of Pelus" (15 x 43½)	•	{ Right Hon. William Kenrick, M.P. (from W. Graham Collection)	1872-81.
"The Ring given to Venus" (12½ x 19)	•	Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart.	1872.1
"Love's Wayfaring" (17 ft. x 9 ft.)	•	" " " "	1872.
"Luna" (40 x 28)	•	R. H. Benson, Esq.	?
"A Dream of Parnassus (8 x 11)	•	Mrs. Sitwell	1872.
"Girls with Lanterns"	•	" " " "	
"Laus Veneris" (47 x 71)	•	" " " "	
"The Mirror of Venus" (48 x 7½)	•	{ Sir William Agnew, Bart. (from W. Graham Collection)	1873-75.
"The Bath of Venus" (53 x 18½)	•	{ C. Sidney Goldmann, Esq. (from Leyland and Ruston Collections)	1873-75.
"Venus Concordia"	•	W. Connal, Esq.	1873-88.
"Venus Discordia"	•	Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart.	1873.1
"A Sibyl"	•	" " " "	1874.
"The Altar of Hymen" (15 x 10½)	•	Sir William Agnew, Bart.	1874.
"The Pilgrim at the Gate of Idleness" (37 x 57)	•	Sir Kenneth Muir Mackenzie, K.C.B.	1874-84.
"A Sacrifice to Hymen" (10½ x 14)	•	W. Connal, Esq.	1875.
"Music" (26½ x 17)	•	Executors of the late Ch. D. Galloway, Esq.	1875.
"Hero" (23 x 30½)	•	R. H. Benson, Esq.	1875.
Designs for "Perseus" Series:	•	Mrs. W. Graham	
(Three groups 40 x 14, 50 x 14, 58 x 14)	•	Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart.	1875-76.
"The Boat" (31 x 59½)	•	Colonel H. Jekyll	?
"The Guardian Angel"	•	Mrs. J. W. Mackail	1876.
"The Annunciation" 2 (93 x 44)	•	The Earl of Carlisle	1876-79.
"The Tower of Brass (90 x 45)	•	{ Corporation of Glasgow (presented by W. Connal, Esq.)	1876-88.
"The Story of Perseus":	•	Sir Alexander Henderson, Bart.	1876-88.
1. The Call of Perseus (60 x 54).	•		
2. Perseus and the Graie (60 x 66).	•		
3. Perseus and the Nereids (60 x 54).	•		
4. The Finding of Medusa (60 x 54).	•		
5. The Birth of Pegasus and Chrysaor.	•		
6. The Flight of Perseus (60 x 54).	•		

1 Unfinished.

2 A design in gold and water-colour for this picture belongs to the Hon. Mrs. Percy Wyndham.

TITLE.	MEDIUM.	OWNER.	DATE.
"Portrait of Miss Katherine Lewis" (23½ x 49½)	o	Lady Lewis	1882.
"The Morning of the Resurrection"	o	St. Peter's Church, Vere Street	1882-86.
"Wood-Nymph" (47½ x 47½)	o	W. Connal, Esq.	1883.
"Portrait of Miss Gertrude Lewis"	o	Lady Lewis	1883.
"The Spirit of the Downs"	w	W. A. S. Benson, Esq.	1883.
"Portrait of Miss Fitzgerald" (32½ x 19½)	o	Mrs. W. J. Fitzgerald	1884.
"The Depths of the Sea" (27 x 29)	o	R. H. Benson, Esq.	1885-86.
"Flamma Vestalis" (43 x 12½)	o	Lord Davey	1886.
"Portrait of Miss Norton"	o	Professor Eliot Norton (Harvard, U.S.A.)	1886-87.
"Portrait of Miss Burne-Jones" (Mrs. Mackail) }	o	Lady Burne-Jones	1886-87.
"The Garden of Pan" (36 x 73½)	o	Lilian, Duchess of Marlborough.	1886-87.
"St. George" (73 x 23)	o	The Earl of Carlisle	1886-98.
"St. Francis" (10½ x 7)	w	Sent to Father Damien at Molokai	1887.
"Angel with Cymbals"	o	?	1887.
"King and Shepherd"	o	St. John's Church, Torquay	1888.
"The Nativity"	o	"	1888.
"The Star of Bethlehem" (12 ft. x 8 ft.)	w	Corporation of Birmingham	1888-91.
"Mermaid and Sea-Rabies" (53 x 42)	o	Mrs. Crawshaw	?
"The Heart of the Rose" (37 x 52)	o	W. Connal, Esq.	1889.
"Sponsa de Libano" (128 x 61)	w	Corporation of Liverpool	1890-91.
"Miss Amy Gaskell" (Mrs. Bonham) (37 x 20)	o	Mrs. Gaskell	1893.
"The Annunciation" (two panels)	o	St. Peter's, Vere Street.	1893.
"Vespertina Qutes" (42½ x 24)	o	Mrs. Maurice Beddington	1893.
"Hope"	w	Mrs. Gaskell	1893.
"Portrait of Lady Windsor" (79 x 37)	o	Lord Windsor.	1893.
"Portrait of Miss Dorothy Drew" (32½ x 16½)	o	Mrs. Drew	1894.
"Love among the Ruins" (40 x 61)	o	George McCulloch, Esq.	1894.
"The Fall of Lucifer" (96 x 46½)	o	Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart.	1894.
"The Wedding of Psyche" (46½ x 84½)	o	George McCulloch, Esq.	1894-95.

1 Mr. J. W. Mackail has a small water-colour variation of this subject.

2 A replica of this picture was painted in water-colour in 1897.

3 An unfinished version of this picture is at the Garden Studio.

4 Replica of the 1890-73 water-colour.

SUBJECT.	PEN-AND-INK	OWNER.	DATE.
"Custos Martyrum" (64 x 21½)	.	Sir William Agnew, Bart.	?
"Aurora" (70 x 30)	.	Earl Cowper, K.G.	1896.
"Flamma Vestalis" 1 (24½ x 16½)	.	C. Sidney Goldmann, Esq.	1896.
"The Dream of Launcelot at the Chapel of the Sangrael" (53½ x 66½)	.	W. Graham Robertson, Esq.	1896.
"St. Michael the Archangel"	w	Lady Alma-Tadema	1896.
"The Answering String" (13½ x 8½)	w	J. F. Horner, Esq.	1896.
"The Pilgrim of Love" (61 x 120)	.	Mary, Duchess of Sutherland	1896-97.
"The Wizard" 2 (36 x 21)	.	{ Sir John C. Holder, Bart. (lent to the Corporation of Birmingham)	1897.
"A Birthday Greeting"	w	{ Sir Laurence Alma-Tadema, R.A.	1898.
"Christ and the Four Evangelists" 3 (five panels)	.	{ Christina Rossetti Memorial, Christ Church, Woburn Square	1898.

1 This picture is a slightly varying replica of the head of the "Flamma Vestalis" of 1896.

2 An unfinished replica of this picture is in the Garden Studio Collection.

3 Partly painted by Mr. T. M. Rooke, A.R.W.S., Burne-Jones's friend and assistant.

II. PEN-AND-INK DRAWINGS, PENCIL DRAWINGS, DESIGNS FOR ILLUSTRATIONS, ETC.

SUBJECT.	PEN-AND-INK	OWNER.	DATE.
"The Waxed Image"	.	A. E. Street, Esq.	1856.
"The Knight's Farewell"	.	Miss May Morris	1858.
"Sir Galahad"	.	Colonel Gillum	1858-59.
"Alys la Belle Pèlerine"	.	Richard Mills, Esq.	1858-59.
"Going to the Battle"	.	"The Marquess of Lansdowne"	1858-59.
"Kings Daughters"	.	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1859.
"The Wedding of Buondelmonte"	.	G. Rae, Esq.	1860.
"The Wise and Foolish Virgins"	.	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1860.
"Sire Degrevaunt"—"The Return from the Wedding"	.	Henry Wallis, Esq.	1860.
"Sire Degrevaunt"—"The Wedding Feast"	.		1860.

SUBJECT.	OWNER.	DATE.
"Girls in a Meadow" (design for Mr. G. P. Boyce's piano)	Mrs. Radcliffe	1861.
"Ladies and Death"	? (Formerly in Boyce Collection).	1861.
"Childie Rolande"	? (Formerly in possession of Mr. Ruskin)	1861.
"The Backgammon Players"	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1861.
"A Love Scene"	"	1862.
"Virgin and Child"	Mrs. Radcliffe	1862.
"King Sigurd"	(Drawn for <i>Good Words</i>)	1862.
"Summer Snow"	"	1863.
"Ezekiel and the Boiling Pot"	(Drawn for Dalziel Bible)	1863.
"The Return of the Dove to the Ark"	(" ")	1863.
"The Eve of the Deluge"	(" ")	1863.
"The Creation" (7 subjects)	(" ") (in the possession of E. Clifford, Esq.)	1864.
"The Deliverer"	(Drawn for Mrs. Gatty's <i>Parables from Nature</i>)	1864-65.
"St. George and the Dragon" (7 subjects)	Sir Edward Poynter, R.A.	1865.
"Le Chant d'Amour"	J. Comyns Carr, Esq.	1865.
"Cupid and Psyche" (70 illustrations)	(Original sketches: Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq. Finished drawings: Ruskin School, Oxford)	1865.
"Pygmalion and the Image" (11 illustrations)	Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart.	1867-68.
"The Ring given to Venus" (2 illustrations)	"	1867-68.
"The Hill of Venus" (12 illustrations)	(Original sketches: Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart. Finished drawings: Ruskin School, Oxford)	1867-68.
"Women playing on Instruments" (title-page to <i>Early Paradise</i>)	"	1868.
"On Two Sides of the River" (illustration to Morris's MS. Book of Verses)	Lady Burne-Jones	1870.

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"Love is Enough" (designed as frontispiece for Morris's poem of that name. Printed at end of Kelmscott Press edition, 1897).	Pen-and-Ink	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1871.
"Venus Concordia"	Pencil	Sir Edward Poynter, P.R.A.	1871.
"Wisdom and the House of Wisdom" (cover of Apocrypha)	Pen-and-Ink	" "	1871.
"The Masque of Cupid" (2 designs for mural decoration, each $2\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{4}$)	Pencil	Mrs. Horner	1871.
"Omar Khayyám" (6 illustrations to Morris's MS.)	Water-Colour	{ 1. R. H. Benson, Esq. 2. The Duke of Portland	1871.
<i>The Story of Orpheus</i> (11 designs)	Pencil	Mrs. Horner.	1872.
1. The Garden. 2. The Garden Poisoned. 3. The Gate of Hell. 4. The Door-Keeper. 5 and 6. Across the Flames. 7. The Home of Pluto. 8, 9, and 10. The Regained Lost. 11. The Death of Orpheus.		{ Sir Philip Burne-Jones, Bart. (A design in water-colour of "Orpheus Losing Eurydice" is in the collection of Mr. Fairfax Murray)	1872.
"The Æneid" (20 illustrations and initial letters to Morris's MS.)	Pencil	Laurence W. Hodson, Esq.	1873-74.
"The Ronaunt of the Rose" (designs for 5 embroidered panels): 1. The Pilgrim at the Gate of Idleness. 2. The Wall of the Garden of Idleness (2 compositions) 3. Love leading the Pilgrim. 4. William de Loris dreaming. 5. Danger. 6. Shame. 7. The Procession of the Joys of Life 8. The Heart of the Rose	Water-Colour Pencil Pencil	{ Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart. Mrs. Horner.	1874-80

SUBJECT.	OWNER.	DATE.
"Portrait of Madame Wagner"	.	1877.
"Blind War" (designs for ticket of Exeter Hall Meeting)	.	1878.
"Ulysses and the Ghosts"	Mrs. Drew	1878.
"The Flower Book" (illustrations to the names of flowers)	Lady Burne-Jones	1882.
"The Rape of Persephone"	{ Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart.	1883.
"Centaur and Eagle"	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1883. ?
"St. Francis"	E. Clifford, Esq.	1887.
"The Wise Man Training his Son in Wisdom" (for <i>The Fables of Biddart</i> , edited by J. Jacobs)	.	1887.
"Adam and Eve" (for <i>The Dream of John Ball</i> , Reappeared under title "Labour" in <i>Daily Chronicle</i> , Feb., 1893)	.	.
"Erin" (design for the Irish Industries Association)	{ Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart.	1888.
"The Rape of Persephone"	.	.
"Portrait of Paderewski"	{ Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart.	?
"Maiden gathering Flowers" (title-page to <i>Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology</i> , edited by J. W. Mackail).	.	1890.
"King Poppy" (frontispiece and title-page to Lord Lytton's poem)	.	1890.
Illustrations for the Kelmiscott Press:	.	.
<i>The Golden Legend</i> (2).	.	1892.
<i>The Order of Chivalry</i> (1).	.	.
<i>The Wood beyond the World</i> (1).	.	.
<i>Syr Percyvelle of Gales</i> (1).	.	.
<i>Syre Degrevaunt</i> (1).	.	.
<i>Syr Ysambrace</i> (1).	.	.
<i>The Life and Death of Jason</i> (2).	.	1892-97.
<i>Sigurd the Volsung</i> (2).	.	.

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The Well at the World's End (4).
Love is Enough (frontispiece).
Chaucer (87).

"The Beginning of the World" (25) ¹	Pencil	{ (Published by Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1901).	1894.
"Venice"	Pen-and-Ink	{ For New Gallery Catalogue of Exhibition of Venetian Art . . .	1894.
"Pandora's Box" (4 subjects)	Pencil	{ Mrs. Coventry Patmore . . .	1898.
"The High History of the Holy Graal" (frontispiece and 2 illustrations)		{ For Mr. Sebastian Evans's translation, published by Dent in the <i>Temple Classics</i> . . .	

¹ These are the 25 most finished drawings of a series begun by Sir E. Burne-Jones to illustrate Mr. J. W. Mackail's *Biblia Innocentium*.

III. MURAL PAINTINGS, PAINTINGS ON FURNITURE, ETC., DESIGNS FOR TILES, NEEDLEWORK, METALWORK, MOSAICS, TAPESTRY, ETC.

SUBJECT.	OWNER.	DATE.
"The Prioress's Tale"	{ Mrs. William Morris (lent to Ashmolean Museum, Oxford)	1857-58.
"Merlin and Nimue"	{ Oxford Union Library . . .	1857-58.
"The Legend of St. Frideswide"	W. Graham Robertson, Esq.	1859-62.
"Le Chant d'Amour"	Lady Burne-Jones . . .	1860.
"The Marriage of Sire Degrevant"	. . .	1860.
"The Return from the Wedding"	{ Collection of the late G. P. Boyce, Esq. . .	1860.
"The Wedding Feast"	{ Birmingham Art Gallery . . .	1861.
"Girls in a Meadow"		
"St. Cecilia and St. Dorothy"		

SUBJECT.	OWNER.	DATE.
"Luna"	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1862.
"Winter"	" "	"
"Cinderella."	" "	"
"Sleeping Beauty."	" "	"
"The Legend of Good Women"	{ A screen worked by Mrs. Morris from these designs is in the possession of the Earl of Carlisle. Three of the designs—"Cleopatra," "Philomela, and "Thisbe" belong to Mrs. Severn . . .	1862. 1864. 1864.
"Musica"	A. E. Street, Esq.	1867.
"The Seasons" (4 panels, 18½ x 1)	" "	1872.
"Maidens" (14 panels, representing the Signs of the Zodiac and the Sun and Moon).	" "	1872-82.
"Man playing Organ"	" "	1876.
The "Cupid and Psyche" Frieze	" "	"
"The Seasons" (4 designs for needlework)	The Earl of Carlisle	"
"The Song of Songs" (5 designs for needlework)	" "	"
"Nativity"	{ 1. Executors of the late G. F. Watts, Esq. 2, 3, 4. Mrs. Horner	1876.
"Entombment"	Ch. Fairfax Murray, Esq.	1879.
"The Story of Orpheus"	" "	"
"Terra Omniparens"	Mrs. Horner	1879-82.
"The Poet"	" "	"
"The Heart of the Lotus"	H. Reese, Esq.	1880.

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"Flodden Field"	{ Design for metalwork executed by Sir E. Boehm for Naworth Castle }	Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart. . . .	1882.
"The New Jerusalem"	{ Designs for mosaics in the American church in Rome }	{ The model for the apse and the cartoon of "The Tree of Life," $\frac{1}{4}$ of real size ($71 \times 95\frac{1}{2}$), are in the Victoria and Albert Museum }	1883-87.
"The Annunciation"	{ Design for tapestry for Exeter College Chapel. (Repeated for Corporation of Manchester and for Mr. Wilfred Blunt) }	Mrs. J. W. Mackail	1887.
"The Nativity"	{ Water-colour on vellum (cover to Beethoven's Songs) }	Mrs. Drew	1888.
"The Fall of Lucifer"	{ Designs for tapestry (the backgrounds designed by W. Morris). . . . }	. . . . .	1891-94.
"The Adoration of the Magi"	{ Series of designs for tapestry, executed by Morris and Co. for Stanmore Hall and repeated for G. McCulloch, Esq. . . . }	. . . . .
"Orpheus and his Lute" 1	"The Quest of the San Grael": 1. The Apparition of the Dam- sel of the San Grael. 2. The Departure of the Knights. 3. The Failure of Sir Gawaine and Sir Ywaine. 4. The Dream of Sir Launcelot. 5. Sir Galahad, Sir Bors, and Sir Perceval at the Chapel of the San Grael. 6. The Ship of the Knights. 7. "Verdura" of Stags grazing in a Wood.	. . . . .

1 A similar design, unfinished, belongs to Mrs. J. W. Mackail.

SUBJECT.	OWNED BY C. Giuliano.	OWNER.	DATE.
"Design for a Brooch"	.	.	1883.
"Design for May Queen's Cross" (Whitlands College)	.	.	1893.
"Design for the Leyland Tomb"	.	.	1894.
"Design for Seal for the University of Wales"	.	.	1894.
"Designs for Armour, Costumes," etc.	For Lyceum play of <i>King Arthur</i> , produced Jan. 1895	.	1894.
"The Triumph of Love"	Painting on a fan	Mrs. Mackail.	1897.
"St. Margaret and the Dragon"	Painting on a clavichord	"	1897.
"The Passing of Venus"	Design for tapestry	{ Executors of the late Sir E. Burne-Jones, Bart.	1898.

Many pencil and chalk drawings can be seen at the Garden Studio: two studies of heads and several cartoons at the Victoria and Albert Museum; a fine collection of drawings and cartoons at the Birmingham Art Gallery; and a book of designs and sketches (1885-95), as well as some drawings for glass, at the British Museum.

IV. WORKS IN GESSO

SUBJECT.	OWNED BY	DATE.
"Perseus and the Graiae"	The Right Hon. Arthur J. Balfour, M.P.	1867.
"The Triumph of Love"	Duke of Westminster	1878.
"Cupid's Hunting Fields"	Executors of the late Mrs. Hollins.	1886.
"Peacock and Laurel"	{ Memorial tablet to Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton at Mells, Somerset	1888.
"The Hesperides"	Mrs. Horner	1893.
"Pandora"	"	1893.

V. CARTOONS FOR STAINED GLASS

A list of cartoons and places where windows by Burne-Jones may be seen, compiled from the books of Messrs. Morris and Co., is given in Mr. Malcolm Bell's book, *Sir Edward Burne-Jones: A Record and Review*. A collection of these cartoons has lately been given to the Birmingham Art Gallery by Mr. Ch. Fairfax Murray. A list of the early cartoons, designed for Messrs. Powell, and of some of the more important of the later ones, follows.

SUBJECT.	DATE.
Designs done for Messrs. Powell—	
"The Good Shepherd"	1857.
"St. Peter and St. Paul"	1857.
"Adam and Eve"	1857-58.
"The Tower of Babel"	1859.
"Solomon and the Queen of Sheba"	1859.
"St. Frideswide"	1859.
"The Patriarchs"	1862.
"The Seed of David"	1863.
"The Prophets"	1864.
Designs done for Messrs. Morris and Co.—	
"The Song of Songs"	1864.
"The Battle of Beth-horon"	1864.
"Elijah and the Prophets of Baal"	1864.
"The Martyrdom of St. Stephen"	1864.
"The Deliverance of St. Peter from Prison"	1864.
"Chaucer Asleep"	1864.
"The God of Love and Alcestis"	1864.
"Dido and Cleopatra"	1864.
"Penelope"	1864.
"Chaucer's Dream of Good Women"	1864.
"Garland-Weavers"	1864.
"Symbols of the Four Evangelists"§	1864.

1 With the exception of the "St. Frideswide," these cartoons can be seen at the Whitefriars Glass Factory.
 § Cartoon in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

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Subject.	DATE.
Designs done for Messrs. Morris and Co. (<i>continued</i>)—	
"The Vyner Memorial"	1872.
"Sibyls and Evangelists"	1872-74.
"The Days of Creation"	1873.
"St. Cecilia"	1874.
"The Last Judgment"	1874.
"Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego" ¹	1875.
"The Worship of the Lamb"	1875.
"Angeli Ministrantes"	1878.
"St. Catherine"	1878.
"Christ and the Woman of Samaria"	1878.
"The Building of the Temple"	1881.
"The Entry into Jerusalem"	1882.
"The Norse Window" ²	1882.
"Holy Women"	1883.
"The Crossing of the Jordan"	1883-91.
"Miriam, Ruth, and Jephthah's Daughter"	1885.
"Lord Amphill Memorial"	1886.
"The Nativity" ³	1887.
"The Crucifixion" ³	1889.
"The Pelican"	1890.
"The Good Shepherd"	1890.
"The Last Judgment" ³	1890.
"The Tree of Jesse"	1890.
"Jacob's Ladder"	1890.
"The Twelve Apostles"	1890.
"The Nativity"	1890.
Christ Church, Oxford	1890.
Jesus College, Cambridge	1890.
Middleton Cheney and Tamworth	1890.
Christ Church, Oxford	1890.
Easthamstead	1890.
Farnworth (Lancashire)	1890.
Allerton	1890.
Salisbury Cathedral	1890.
Christ Church, Oxford	1890.
St. Peter's, Vere Street	1890.
Holy Trinity Church, Boston, U.S.A.	1890.
St. Peter's, Vere Street	1890.
Newport, Rhode Island, U.S.A.	1890.
Whitlands Training College	1890.
St. Giles, Edinburgh	1890.
Berlin	1890.
St. Philip's, Birmingham	1890.
Ingestre	1890.
St. James's, Marylebone	1890.
St. Philip's, Birmingham	1890.
Rottingdean	1890.
Dundee (Diamond Jubilee Memorial)	1890.
Hawarden	1890.

¹ These cartoons, mounted into a screen, belong to Messrs. Pearson and Co.

² The studies for the sub-subjects of this window belong to Mrs. Coronio.

³ The cartoons for these windows are in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

PRINCIPAL SALES

At the Ellis sale in 1884 "Caritas" was sold for £530, "Temperantia" for £640, "Fides" for £577, and "Spes" for £619.

At the W. Graham sale in 1886 the prices realised were:—"Landscape" (1860), 40 guineas; "King René's Honeymoon," 200 guineas; "Fair Rosamond and Queen Eleanor," 75 guineas; "Zephyrus and Psyche," 115 guineas; "A Lament," 100 guineas; "Princess Sabra" (pencil), 40 guineas; "The Choristers," 185 guineas; "Cupid and Psyche," 300 guineas; "Chaucer's Dream," 180 guineas; "Green Summer," 500 guineas; "Le Chant d'Amour" (first version), 580 guineas; "St. Agnes, St. Barbara, and St. Dorothea," 300 guineas; "The Mirror of Venus" (small version), 780 guineas; "The King's Wedding," 155 guineas; "St. Cecilia," 180 guineas; "Danaë and the Brazen Tower" (small version), 210 guineas; "The Hesperides" (1869), 350 guineas; "Love Disguised as Reason," 700 guineas; "Pygmalion" (1871), 310 guineas; "Medea," 55 guineas; "Sibylla Tiburtina," 40 guineas; "St. George" (1877), 585 guineas; "An Angel," 250 guineas; "The Feast of Peleus," 900 guineas; "The Days of Creation," 1,650 guineas; "Laus Veneris," 2,550 guineas; "Le Chant d'Amour" (second version), 3,150 guineas; coloured cartoon for "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid," 730 guineas.

At the Leyland sale in 1892 eleven pictures by Burne-Jones were sold:—"The Mirror of Venus" (large version), 3,400 guineas; "The Beguiling of Merlin," 3,600 guineas; "The Seasons" (four pictures), 1,150 guineas; "Night" and "Day," 1,350 guineas; "Phyllis and Demophoon," 810 guineas; "The Wine of Circe," 1,350 guineas; "Cupid and Psyche" (1867), 900 guineas.

At the Craven sale in 1895 "The Hesperides" was sold for 2,560 guineas, "Vesper" for 450 guineas, "Night" for 430 guineas, and the "Pygmalion" series for 3,500 guineas.

At the Ruston sale in May, 1898, "The Mirror of Venus" was sold for 5,450 guineas, "Le Chant d'Amour" for 3,200 guineas, "The Beguiling of Merlin" for 3,780 guineas, and the companion pictures of "Day" and "Night" for 1,000 guineas.

At the sale of remaining works (July 16th and 18th, 1898) "Love and the Pilgrim" was sold for 5,500 guineas, "The Fall of Lucifer" for £1,000, "Elijah in the Wilderness" for 950 guineas, "The Tree of Life" for 770 guineas, a pastel drawing of "The Dream of Launcelot" for 680 guineas, and a pastel design for tapestry, "The Departure of the Knights," for 610 guineas. The whole sum realised was £29,475 8s.

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Magazine, The Strand, The Studio, The Windsor, etc.*

REPRODUCTIONS OF PICTURES, ETC.

Photographic reproductions of most of the works of Sir E. Burne-Jones are published by F. Hollyer, 9, Pembroke Square, London, W. A few early works have been photographed only by J. Caswall Smith, 309, Oxford Street, W., and the Autotype Company, 74, New Oxford Street, W.C. Photographs can also be obtained at Birmingham of some of the works in the collection. "The Depths of the Sea" is published by Messrs. Braun, Paris; "Laus Veneris" by the Berlin Photographic Company; "The Briar Rose" by Messrs. Agnew; "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid" by Messrs. P. and D. Colnaghi.

A limited edition of a collection of eighty-four pictures and two portraits,¹ entitled *The Work of E. Burne-Jones*, was published by the Berlin Photographic Company in 1901.

A limited edition of "The Flower Book," reproduced in colour, has been published by the Fine Art Society in 1905.

¹ The portraits are those painted in 1870 by G. F. Watts, R.A., and in 1898 by Sir Philip Burne-Jones, Bart. The originals of both belong to Lady Burne-Jones.

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